

Collective Violence:
A Study of the Gendered and Socio-Economic Factors
Behind
Early Modern Italian and English
Witch Hunts

Elizabeth C. D'Angelo M.A.

Studies in Comparative Literatures and Arts

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Faculty of Humanities, Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario

© 2011

This thesis is first and foremost dedicated to my mother, without whom none of this would have been possible, to my supervisors Dr. Cristina Santos and Dr. Corrado Federici, who believed in my work, and to all of the women and men who have and continue to face persecution because of the way they choose to live their life.

Table of Contents

Abstract:.....	1-2
Chapter 1:.....	3-24
The Invention of the Witch: Socio-Political Contexts in Early Modern England & Italy	
Chapter 2:.....	25-43
Witches in the Cultural Imaginary: Self and Other in the Visual Field	
Chapter 3:.....	44-69
“Non Lasciare Vivere la Malefica:” Witches at their Trials	
Illustrations:.....	70-93
Works Cited:.....	94-97

Abstract

Collective Violence: A Study of the Gendered and Socio-Economic Factors Behind Early Modern Italian and English Witch Hunts

In this study, I build upon my previous research in which I focus on religious doctrine as a gendered disciplinary apparatus, and examine the witch trials in early modern England and Italy in light of socio-economic issues relating to gender and class. This project examines the witch hunts/trials and early modern visual representations of witches, and what I suggest is an attempt to create docile bodies out of members of society who are deemed unruly, problematic and otherwise 'undesirable'; it is the witch's body that is deemed counternormative. This study demonstrates that it is neighbours and other acquaintances of accused witches that take on the role of the invisible guard of Bantham's Panopticon. As someone who is trained in the study of English literature and literary theory, my approach is one that is informed by this methodology. It is my specialization in early modern British literature that first exposed me to witch-hunting manuals and tales of the supernatural, and it is for this reason that my research commences with a study of representations of witches and witchcraft in early modern England. From my initial exposure to such materials I proceed to examine the similarities and the differences of the cultural significance of the supernatural vis-à-vis women's activities in early modern Italy. The subsequent discussion of visual representations of witches involves a predominance of Germanic artists, as the seminal work on the discernment of witches and the application of punishment known as the *Malleus Meleficarum*, was written in Germany circa 1486.

Textual accounts of witch trials such as: "A Pitiless Mother (1616)," "The Wonderful Discovery of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Philippa Flower (1619)," "Magic and Poison: The Trial of Chiaretta and Fedele (circa 1550)", and the "The Case

of Benvegnuda Pincinella: Medicine Woman or Witch (1518),”and witchhunting manuals such as the *Malleus Meleficarum* and *Strix* will be put in direct dialogue with visual representations of witches in light of historical discourses pertaining to gender performance and gendered expectations. Issues relating to class will be examined as they pertain to the material conditions of presumed witches.

The dominant group in any temporal or geographic location possesses the tools of representation. Therefore, it is not surprising that the physical characteristics, sexual habits and social material conditions that are attributed to suspected witches are attributes that can be deemed deviant by the ruling class. The research will juxtapose the social material conditions of suspected witches with the guilt, anxiety, and projection of fear that the dominant groups experienced in light of the changing economic landscape of the Renaissance. The shift from feudalism to primitive accumulation, and capitalism saw a rise in people living in poverty and therefore an increased dependence upon the good will of others. I will discuss the social material conditions of accused witches as informed by what Robyn Wiegman terms a “minoritizing discourse” (210). People of higher economic standing often blamed their social, medical, and/or economic difficulties on the less fortunate, resulting in accusations of witchcraft.

Chapter One

The Invention of the Witch: Socio-Political Contexts in Renaissance England & Italy

Early modern discourse surrounding witchcraft accusations and the attribution of malicious intent to the alleged perpetrators of the crime is not one that is homogenous or monolithic in nature. Rather, it is dynamic and ever evolving. The question of how witch hunting and persecution came to be such an alarming and all-consuming event in certain geographical areas in Northern Europe may be attributed to socio-political realities that are temporally and geographically specific. As Edward Bever notes, though some trials were indeed vehemently prosecuted by government officials who were truly obsessed with a “diabolical conspiracy” (955), the reality is that most accusations of sorcery were made by neighbours of the alleged witch. Such a phenomenon has led me to ask why that was the case. If an accusation of witchcraft could lead to such dire consequences, why would an acquaintance (probably since birth) make such a grave pronouncement against someone who may have once been their ally or friend? Though a cursory discussion of witch-hunting in Renaissance England and Renaissance Italy may give the semblance of an ordeal that was very similar, the reality is that, because the specificity of the religious, social, and political climate of each country varied considerably, the resulting beliefs surrounding witchcraft and sorcery also varied.

The investigation into the motivating factors behind the witch trials may be conducted in a fashion similar to that in popular contemporary television shows such as *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, or *Criminal Minds*. What is it about the alleged perpetrator of the crime that leads neighbours and/or authorities to consider accusations

against the person, plausible? It is important to remember that accusations of witchcraft could often be attributed to such banal events as one neighbour 'cursing' another because she/he would not share an afternoon meal with someone who was experiencing economic hardship. During the early modern period, Europe was witness to many social and economic changes. Brian P. Levack notes that it was during this time that Europe saw a great increase in population after a long period of stagnation (*The Witch-Hunt* 127). Perhaps in response to the rise in population, the prices of everyday foodstuffs and commodities also rose. It is also during this time that there was a shift in the economic landscape with the introduction of capitalism into what were generally feudal economies. Though one should always be wary of presenting homogenous and teleological histories, I do suggest that such factors did indeed exacerbate an already anxiety-ridden climate.

The Witch in England

Why exactly had such concern over witchcraft become the business of the elite? John Jewel, in a speech presented before Queen Elizabeth in 1563, describes how witchcraft was adversely affecting the people of England:

This kind of people (I mean witches and sorcerers) within these few years are marvellously increased within this your grace's realm. These eyes have seen most evident and manifest marks of their wickedness. Your grace's subjects pine away even unto death, their colour fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their eyes are bereft. Wherefore, your poor subjects' most humble petition unto your highness is, that the law touching such malefactors may be put

in due execution. For the shoal of them is great, their doings horrible, their malice intolerable, the examples most miserable. And I pray God they never practice further than upon the subject. (Quoted in Deborah Willis, "James Among" 120)

Though a genuine concern for her majesty's people may have been part of Jewel's sentiment, it seems more probable that his and other elites' central concern was the well-being of the kingdom as a political entity. Willis suggests that accusations of witchcraft and trials for sorcery and witchcraft were on the rise because of the rule of Mary I, who was Catholic. It was Elizabeth who, at this point, was being asked to make her mark by going against her sister's Romanist ways. Because of new modes of understanding and applying the teachings of the Bible, the newly developing Protestant religion was being heralded as being more pious and biblically correct than its Catholic predecessor (Willis 120). The use of witchcraft trials became a way of policing counter-beliefs, such as "papisty, scepticism, mere ignorance, and popular magical traditions" (120). Along such lines, greater conformity was a must in post-Reformation England as it was the clerics' and magistrates' duty to police public morality. Therefore, it is not surprising that the witch, or rather what she came to symbolize, became a problematic figure in the face of ideological reform.

Though such theories concerning the political undertones of witch-hunting do shed light upon the issue, it still does not necessarily account for the disproportionate representation of women among the accused. Though also apparent in the lives of men, women experienced economic pressures more so than their male counterparts. As is explained by Willis, it was a woman's role to ask her neighbours for food if her family had none, and it was also more probable that a woman would become economically

dependant in her old age, especially if she became a widow. Certainly, it may be argued that men, as well as women, found themselves in such situations; the fact remains that more women than men took on, or were placed, in such roles.

The stereotypical characteristics of an alleged witch, though not necessarily biologically female, were and still are commonly attributed to women. The *Malleus Maleficarum*, which will be discussed later in this chapter, outlines and attributes all that is perceived as malicious and of questionable moral character to women, and therefore, witches. There is also an evident fear or anxiety in relation to the female body and the maternal in the description of witches' activities with the devil and her familiars (cats, mice, etc.). The presumed witch is often described as having a teat from which she feeds (nurses?) her familiars. This is very interesting as most of the paintings that will be discussed in the subsequent chapter depict older women who have their breasts exposed. The inclusion of the older, post-menopausal woman is not at all surprising, as great anxiety surrounds women's sexual experience as well as their childbearing capacity. Therefore, the older, sexually experienced woman who can no longer bear children, and who is more than likely widowed, is a very problematic figure. It is this figure that represents all that is feared and abjected within early modern culture.

In a world in which identity for women is always relational, it is not difficult to understand why it is that many of the people who made accusations of witchcraft against other women, were in fact women. Contrary to authors such as Christina Lerner and Catherine Belsey, Willis suggests that accusations of witchcraft amongst neighbours were not only about patriarchal models of gender performance; they were also about setting and testing new boundaries for acceptable behaviours among women (“(Un)

Neighbourly,” 72). Texts such as the *Malleus* may be read as a type of conduct manual for early modern citizens, and because of women’s presumed inferior intellectual and moral capacity, patriarchal cultures such as that of England, readily accepted the notion that women were indeed more susceptible to the evil arts. In many of the accusations made amongst neighbours, women’s sexual behaviour as well as their role as mother was often put into question. The *Malleus*, like other similar texts¹, links lust and an insatiable sexual appetite with women and with the devil.

It is also important to elaborate upon women’s roles within the typical early modern English village community. Women were often midwives, cooks, and healers. That being said, most of such activities, though very admirable and necessary, left women open to accusations of witchcraft, especially with the advent of science and the medicalization of births. During the early modern period, “as many as one-fifth of all children died either at birth or during the first few months of life” (Levack, *The Witchcraft* 139). Infanticide was also somewhat common during this time, and the midwife became an easy target to blame for the ‘unexpected’ death of a child. Levack notes that, as a cook, a woman had many opportunities in which she could gather herbs, prepare potions, or even poison her intended victim. This crucial aspect of women’s daily lives is visually represented in the image of the witch standing over a boiling caldron to undertake her diabolical scheme. The fact that women were in charge of keeping people healthy, either their own family or other villagers, meant that they were also quickly blamed for disease or death. The *Malleus Maleficarum* does also refer to women who had the capacity to harm as well as heal.

¹ See also Pico’s *Strix*, Francesco Maria Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum*, Jean Bodin’s *Demonomania*, Bartolomeo Spina’s *Quastio de Strigibus*, Giacomo Stuart’s *Demonologia*.

The marital status of accused witches may also have contributed to the accusations. A woman who was not subject to the authority of a man, either her husband, father or brother, was a source of concern for society in general, and not only for her relatives. Though this may not have been the sole reason behind witchcraft accusations of single or widowed women, it certainly played a role. Though I suggest that this was even more problematic in Italy than in England, the fact remains that a woman who was not subject to a man was more likely to live in poverty, and therefore more in need of the goodwill of her neighbours. When such neighbours did not agree with her or did not want to part with their already scarce commodities, that woman became more susceptible to being labelled a witch. It must not be forgotten that the 'witch' moniker was also one of convenience for the accuser as well as the accused. Much power could be exerted under such duress.

The Witch in Renaissance Italy

As is observed by Luciano Parinetto in his *Streghe e Politica* it is since the times of Giovanni Boccaccio (mid- 1300) and throughout the Renaissance that Italian intellectuals, that is to say priests and magistrates, have dedicated a particularly interesting designation to witchcraft and sorcery. Such matters have typically been discussed with a tone of irony. The author stresses that he does not intend magic or sorcery as that which was elevated as a particularly attuned mode of apprehension, such as that discussed by the humanists of the time², but rather as popular folklore.

² Niccolò Machiavelli, Giordano Bruno, Galileo, Francis Bacon, John Calvin, Martin Luther.

Even though the witch-hunting campaign had begun long before the arrival of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, this text, along with the pronouncements of the clergy, set the tone for how the killer-witch was to be represented in the cultural imaginary. The age of the counter-Reformation, which also coincides with an era of religious turmoil that greatly affected much of post-Renaissance Europe, created a reflux-like response. Such a response would seek to quash the freedom of the anti-dogmatic populace during the Renaissance. Parinetto suggests that the so-called reflux is in response to the arrest, torture, and at times death sentences imposed upon such illustrious Italian personages as Giordano Bruno (1548- 1600), Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), and that because of this, the witch either did not exist in the cultural imaginary, or was imagined alongside the grotesque or the carnivalesque (23).

In “The Roman Inquisition and Witchcraft: 1542-1600,” Matteo Duni observes that the dissemination of Protestantism began quite early in the Italian states, with particular vehemence in the Apennines. Trials against people who were defined as “Lutherans” can be dated back to the 1520s. As the numbers of followers of the new doctrine augmented, especially in urban areas, so did Pope Paul III’s concern over the reign of his “repressive apparatus” (Duni 32). In “1542 Pope Paul III instituted a special committee composed of six cardinals, in charge of overseeing the prosecution of heretics in the Italian peninsula” (32). This special committee, referred to as the Holy Office or the Roman Inquisition, for approximately 40 years busied itself with the persecution of Protestants, and generally speaking, Protestant-related doctrine, or at least what was perceived as such. Under the pontificate of Paul IV from 1555 to 1559 and then under that of Pius V from 1566 to 1572, almost all of the resources of the office of the Roman

Inquisition, were devoted to the persecution of Protestants, and not to that of witches and accusations of sorcery. As is discussed by Duni, eighty percent of the cases brought before the council in Venice between 1547 and 1582 were ones that involved Italian Protestants. Trials against supposed witches became very rare:

In Modena, for example, during 1540-49 only four women were investigated on charges of magic out of a total of twenty-eight cases opened. In the following decades the average is about one case per year or less (seventeen between 1550 and 1565, only twelve during 1566-80 of a total of 110 and 155 cases, respectively), in marked contrast with the much more sustained pace of the earlier years (thirty-one cases in the period 1517-20 alone. (Duni 33)

It is only after 1580, when the Catholic Church's interest in the rise of Protestantism was ultimately put on hold, that the Roman Inquisition once again began to dedicate its efforts to witchcraft, but this time in a different fashion than in the past. With the conclusion of the Council of Trent on Dec. 4 1563, the Catholic Church brought about new guidelines for how one should practice the Catholic faith. Symbols such as candles, prayers, and even the sign of the cross might now be suspect if not used or exercised in the correct manner. This was the beginning of the Catholic Counter Reformation (circa 1540). Because of such strict new guidelines, the Holy Office was once again called into action. Cases that were referred to as "sortilegia simplicia"(Duni 34) were now also prosecuted by the Holy Office and not the bishops' courts.

Greatly dissimilar to the witches described in the visual representations of Hans Baldung Grien, Albrecht Durer, and demonological literature such as that of Francesco Maria Guazzo, Heinrick Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, (see figures 1, 7,10, 11,12) flying

witches, for example, are not very prominent in trial documents pertaining to Italian women and men prosecuted for witchcraft. This is evident in both the Venice tribunal and that of Modena. It is important to note that these are the two areas in which such trials were overwhelmingly conducted (Venice and Modena) during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Duni 42). Certainly, there are exceptions to all rules, and some of such exceptions that did supposedly involve the cumulative aspects of sorcery are the trials of Giovanna Palli in Modena (1499) and Zilia (or Gilia) in 1519. According to Duni, Giovanna was accused of making children ill, only to subsequently cure them, as well as participating in various Sabbath rituals. Gregorio of Modena, who was the inquisitor at the time, was not at all interested in such activities, and dropped the case. Similarly, the case of Gilia and her mother was also dropped by Bartolomeo Spina. The testimony that was given against Gilia involved women gathering in the woods for a Sabbath-like feast in which a woman resurrected the oxen that were eaten at the feast. Though Spina instructed the officials to put a halt to the investigation and subsequently dropped all of the charges against Gilia and her mother, Duni notes that the topic made quite an impression on the Dominican theologian for he included mention of the resurrection of the oxen in his 1523 text *Quastio de Strigibus (The Problem of the Witches)* (42-44).

A very interesting text that is often referred to, and quoted from, is Jean Bodin's *Demonomania*. Luciano Parinetto in "Streghe e Capitale," suggests that Bodin's work on witch-hunting is greatly emblematic of his condemnation of rogues, poor people, and vagabonds, as well as of his Calvinism. According to Bodin, if one is a morally good person, God will bless that person with bounty (monetary and otherwise). Therefore,

according to this line of reasoning, if one is poor, not liked by the community, of poor health, etc., God has forsaken that person because of some egregious deed. Bodin actually goes on to further accentuate the point by writing that, he who gives himself to the Devil, who turns a blind eye to the graces of God, and who is generally speaking a rebel, will either become or remain poor. This sentiment concerning the accumulation and maintenance of capital is not unique to Bodin or Calvino. In *Demonologia*, published in 1597, Giacomo Stuart also writes that it is very rare that witches who give themselves to the Devil because of greed or a vendetta ever have any substantial gains. Stuart concludes that witches, though they become the slaves of the Devil, always remain poor (discussed in Parinetto's "Streghe e Capitale," *Streghe e Potere* 208). An accumulation of capital is therefore linked to a benediction from God. Without God there are no riches; therefore someone who is poor is so because he is not in God's good graces, while someone who is rich has been blessed.

Though differing on several key factors pertaining to the actions, motivations, and characteristics of supposed witches, the commonality between English and Italian texts by demonologists such as Guazzo, Bodin, Sprenger and Kramer, lies in the fear of groups of women working with each other, rather than against each other. In "Maestre de le strige: Le donne nei processi medievali alle streghe," Laura Caretti and Dinora Corsi observe that, in most documented trials involving alleged acts of witchcraft, there is an intricate tapestry of knowledge that is woven and passed down from an elder woman to subsequent generations. The authors refer to this experienced elder as a "magistra" (68), and it is interesting to note that it is not only other women that the "magistra" teaches, but also men. This is evident in the sex disparity in the visual representations of witches that

will be discussed in chapter two. I would suggest that the key element is that a learned woman is someone who arouses suspicion, whether she is sharing her knowledge with other women or with men. By 1430, such women were no longer believed to be isolated cases, but rather part of a sect or society of witches. Such socio-cultural beliefs ultimately became matters of great importance to the state, and were represented in the *Constitutio Criminalis* by Charles V (ruler of the Holy Roman Empire) in 1532, commonly referred to as *Carolina*. The Spanish sovereign explicates the four central tenets that consent to the accusation and possible subsequent arrest of the alleged witch. The first of these tenets is precisely in relation to the teaching, and therefore the dissemination of witchcraft. Also of great importance and which will be discussed in chapter 3, is the fact that trials for witchcraft and other crimes related to sorcery varied greatly from one Italian state to another. As is illustrated in the visual representations, court documents, and key witch-hunting manuals, such as Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum* (circa 1486), Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608), and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *Strix* (1523), English and Italian socio-cultural and economic realities greatly influenced how witches were imagined by the general populace.

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *Strix* or *La Strega*: The Italian Incarnation

Born in 1469, Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola is often referred to as not being a 'typical' man of his era, for Pico was neither a Platonist nor an Aristotelian, and was rather critical of the current prevailing modes of operation of the Church, even though he was "a staunch defender of [the Catholic Church]" (Costa 427). It is important to note that

Pico not only occupied himself with demonological philosophy, he also wrote texts such as *De Imaginatione* (1501) and *Examen Vanitatis Doctrinae Gentium* (1520) which, C. B. Schmitt claims, “[are] both the first sustained attempt after antiquity to apply the sceptical approach to intellectual problems and the fullest discussion up to that time of the foliation and development of ancient scepticism” (187). Certainly Pico’s claim to popular fame is his *Strix*, written in 1523 and subsequently translated into Italian by Leandro Laberti in 1524. Another version in the vernacular was produced by Turino Turini in 1555. It is Turini’s version that is more readily accessible and often discussed in terms of its greater accuracy. This is the text that one commonly finds under the translated title of *La Strega, Ovvero degli Inganni de’ Demoni*. Costa suggests that the popularity of the text in Italy is primarily due to the obvious reason of its subject matter, but also because of how it deals with witches and magic. Pico’s analysis and explication of sorcery revolves around the sublime and the grotesque, a rather different approach than is typically taken by other artists of his time, towards this topic.

The dichotomous relationship between the sublime and the grotesque may be understood in terms of the divine being associated with the sublime, and the grotesque being associated with the diabolical. Bernard Weinberg suggests that Pico’s text is a work of art that clearly discusses and provides a religious message that is made more palatable for the Italian readership in comparison to Kramer’s and Sprenger’s *Malleus Maleficarum*. As is discussed by Costa, Pico quotes the *Malleus* on three different occasions; the first of which is in reference to the witches’ ability to fly. The issue of flight is contemplated in Part two, Question one, Chapter three of the *Malleus*, as is discussed by Breisach, who is an alleged witch. The second book of *Strix* takes up this

issue in the dialogue between Dicaste, who is an inquisitor, and Apitio, who is a non-believer.

Io mi ricordo già che Enrico ed Iacopo teologi Germani scrissero d'una certa strega che faceva viaggio nel mondo e nell'altro, come più gli piaceva, cio'è vegghiando col corpo, ed alcuna volta solamente con l'imaginazione, quando gl'incresceva il cammino: e che allora gettatasi in sul letto, dette certe parole abominevoli, deceva essergli rappresentato una certa nugola tutto quello che se faceva al giuoco, quasi come in su la scena. (*Strega* 60)

Along the same line of conversation, Apitio (the speaker) refers to the *Malleus* in the last two books of *La Strega*. It is in these sections that the inquisitor points to the Italian text's elegant and lively dialogue as opposed to the purely scholastic style of the *Malleus*. It is also in this context that Pico has Dicaste draw the reader's attention to the changing attitude towards witchcraft. The bull of Innocent VIII sanctions the shift in understanding of witchcraft as a form of mental disease that should therefore not be prosecuted, to one that does not permit any leniency towards those suspected of such deeds.

As with its German counterpart, *La Strega* discusses sexual acts and their possible link with the Devil and the demonic, but in a rather different fashion. The Sabbath, which I suggest may be related to the Christian story of the last supper, is conversely viewed as the grotesque counter response to the sublime of paradise. The reader is introduced to the story of a priest who takes communion to a sick person living in the village. During his travels, the priest meets a young man who tells him that he can show him a miracle. It is when the priest arrives at the special location that the young man

transports the priest by flying to a Sabbath ritual. Completely misled in his understanding of what was transpiring, the priest assumes that he was seeing the Virgin Mary presiding over a feast, and offers her the holy wafer. In this instance, the temptation of the Devil is not sexual in nature, but rather gluttonous, though it may certainly be argued that food can indeed often symbolize sex.

With the inclusion of the preceding episode, I do not mean to suggest that there is no discussion of sexual acts in *La Strega*. There are many episodes in which alleged witches are interviewed and discuss their copulation with demons that present themselves as half human and half animal. There is also an odd reference to the “unnatural sexuality of geese” (Costa 431). The shape of a goose’s feet, says Dicaste in *La Strega*, is a sign of sexual perversion and “una certa parte di quell’uccello incita le donne a lussuria” (*Strega* 66). It is interesting to note that the evil lovers of the witches may be either extraordinarily beautiful or grotesque as in the half-human goose-footed individual discussed in Book III of *La Strega*. Regardless of their physical features, all demonic lovers satisfy their witches in such a way as to put their human male counterparts to shame. Perhaps this aspect of such sex-laden tales reflects men’s anxieties in regard to their sexual performance much more so than any religion-driven persecutions.

In relation to sexual copulation, Pico’s text once again diverts from the *Malleus* in regard to same-sex activity between the devil and male witches. Tamar Herzig suggests that Pico’s preoccupation with sodomy may be influenced by Girolamo Savonarola’s “antisodomy campaign,” (54-5) “and the predominance of men among the alleged witches in the Mirandolese witchcraft trials, in which Pico was personally involved” (55). Because of the thought that demons at one time were angelic beings, it was often

suggested by theologians such as Johannes Nider (circa 1380-1438) that even the Devil would not engage in same-sex relations with men. In order to explain the seduction and copulation of the Devil with humans, Phronimo once again explains to Dicaste in *La Strega* that people are pulled into the dark arts, in part, because of sexual lust. Herzig goes on to discuss this issue in regard to the temptation of the Devil. Though sexual intercourse, as discussed in *La Strega*, is usually heterosexual in nature, even if it is between the Devil and another male, the Devil takes on the form of a female in order to entice the man in question. Shortly after this explanation, the reader is informed that, because the Devil is in fact so diabolical and of course evil, he will also entice men to perform sexual acts with other men. Pico attributes same-sex relations to Greek and Roman antiquity and relates male deities who engaged in sexual activity with other men with demons:

The identification of pagan gods with the demons of the Christian era enables Pico to characterize Apollo as a sodomizing demon, and also to dwell on the myth of Jupiter's abduction of Ganymede in order to prove the Devil's persistence in seducing men and boys sexually. (Herzig 62)

I suggest that witch-hunting manuals may be seen as instruments of social control, and indicative of the fears and anxiety that are geographically and temporally specific. In regard to sexual practices, it is not surprising that *La Strega* includes sodomy as a subject related to the Devil. Until the group was dismantled in 1502, the Ufficiali di notte (the officers of the night) were in charge of identifying sodomites and putting an end to their activities in Florence. As is discussed by Michael Rocke, the initial use of such officers was to keep homosexual actives within an acceptable periphery (12-13). It is during the

reign of Savonarola that, under his moral and religious views, homosexuality came to be more heavily policed. Regardless of such a historical placement of the issue, it is still rather interesting and telling that Pico chose to discuss and apply his views on same-sex relations in the context of witchcraft, seeing as both, during the early modern period, were seen as deviant and contrary to the teachings of the Church.

Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*

Published in 1608, Guazzo's *Compendium* was reprinted in a second edition in 1626. Guazzo, who was a friar in the Order of St. Ambrose in Milan, Italy, set out, as the title of the treatise indicates, to provide its readers with the information required to inform themselves of the ways of the demons. The *Compendium* contains not only information concerning presumed witches, but also court documents and illustrations. As is suggested by Brian P. Levack, Guazzo's text is rather unique in that it discusses the various aspects of making a pact with the Devil. Also, the treatise draws upon several well-known demonological texts of the time, such as that of Sebastian Michaelis' *Pneumanologie*, which was published in Paris in 1587 (*The Witchcraft* 99). Michaelis' treatise discusses a trial against an accused witch in Avignon in 1582 and includes many of the aspects of the pact with the Devil that Guazzo himself includes in the *Compendium*.

In Book I, Guazzo introduces the reader to some of the most common aspects of making a pact with the devil, and identifies the commonalities as being eleven. The pact with the Devil involves the following steps: first there is a clear denial of one's belief in God and therefore Christianity; second, the Devil conducts a mock baptism, as is shown

in the illustrations of the *Compendium* (see fig. 21) and found in chapter two of this book; third, the follower of the Devil denounces his/her baptismal name and takes on a new name; fourth, the Devil provides the follower with new “godparents” and makes him/her deny the godparents that had been chosen for him/her during baptism and confirmation; fifth, the person gives the Devil a piece of his/her clothing in order to signify that he/she gives a part of his/her material being to the Devil; sixth, within a circle, the person swears that he/she is loyal only to the Devil; seventh, the person asks the devil to include him/her in the book of death and to remove him/her from the book of life; eighth, the person must swear to provide the Devil with a sacrifice whenever asked; ninth, the follower must perennially provide the Devil and his demons with gifts; tenth, the Devil brands his followers, but as Levack notes, Guazzo states that this is not the case for all of the Devil’s disciples, but rather only for those whom he deems to be problematic; eleventh, many vows need still be made to the Devil. Such vows are to never “adore the Eucharist” (Levack *The Witch* 100-1), throw insults at the Virgin Mary and all the saints, they will not use the sign of the cross, etc. (100-1). In exchange for such allegiance, the Devil supposedly “always stands by them, [...] fulfills their prayers in this world and brings them to happiness after death” (101). Certainly, for anyone who is familiar with any Christian religion, this is the same function that the worship of God and the saints is to have for the follower of such teachings.

Though this section of Guazzo’s text is somewhat unique as is his use of woodcuts, the remaining two books of the treatise occupy themselves with rather familiar material. The subject of witches’ flight and Sabbath gatherings is discussed at great length. As is the case with other texts, Guazzo’s writings also link poverty with the

Devil. The *Compendium* states that, “il diavolo attira e lega a se le persone per atto carnale e per povertà” (in Abbiati 273), translated as “the devil attracts and binds to himself people by acts of carnal lust as well as by poverty” (my translation). The reader is told of a young woman in Pavia who was taken by force by her lover and then abandoned. The woman, out of rage and for vengeance, gave herself to an incubus. As is evident, the matter of a lover’s scorn features quite prominently in the *Compendium*, as I suggest is the case in numerous other Italian demonological texts, and makes a distinction between witchcraft and *malefica* (discussed in chapter 3).

In Guazzo’s discussion of the possibility of witches’ flight as well as Sabbath gatherings and rituals, one sees a somewhat different approach to men’s participation in such gatherings, but the *Compendium* ultimately comes to the same conclusion as the *Malleus Maleficarum* in regard to women’s particular susceptibility to the dark arts. Guazzo explains that, “in questi convegni notturni si riuniscono una grande moltitudine di persone di entrambi sessi, ma il numero delle donne è di gran lunga maggiore di quello degli uomini” (272). The reasoning behind the preponderance of female worshipers and attendants of the Sabbath is as follows: women are more superstitious and are more predisposed to readily accept that which is given to them (verbal information or otherwise). Guazzo elaborates that, though the credulity of women may be a very positive trait, when used incorrectly, it may bring about disastrous consequences. Also, because women are so credulous by nature, the Devil seeks to take advantage of this trait and to sway women in their faith. The third reason that Guazzo gives for women’s propensity towards the dark arts is that they are very loquacious and like to spread gossip, for they will tell other women anything that is confided to them. Also, says Guazzo, the

fact that women are physically less strong than men and more prone to fits of anger, they resort to the aid of the Devil to exact their revenge.³

Heinrich Kramer (also referred to as Institoris) and Jakob Sprenger's

Malleus Maleficarum: The German Antecedent

But theologians will tell you that these things can be done by the Devil...and you can understand many examples from the book of the Germans Friar Heinrich and Friar Jacob, excellent theologians of the Dominican order, called The Hammer...And you can have this hammer, if you want to use it against those who are hardheaded, and don't want to believe in the truth; so you can either bend them to believe what they are supposed to, or else smash them into a hundred thousand pieces. (Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, *Strix* [1523] quoted in Stephans 32)

In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (circa 1486) Heinrich Kramer and James (Jakob) Sprenger challenge the idea that only silly old women believe in witches and witchcraft by claiming that witches, and their supernatural powers, are real. Interestingly, the authors claim that all ills experienced by humankind are directly linked to the malice of witches (or is that of women?). For the authors argue that women are far more probable to succumb to the temptations of evil because of their moral and intellectual inferiority to men. Moreover, Kramer and Sprenger argue that demons are passive conduits, while it is the witches that are in an active battle for human souls.

This idea of the female witch as conduit is an ironic consequence of the late medieval reconceptualization of the Devil as an abstract, autonomous force rather than as

³ From Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*. "Aggiungi poi che sono iraconde e poiche, a causa della debolezza fisica, non possono vendicarsi, inclinano ai melefici, così da ottenere, con l'aiuto del diavolo e di nascosto, contro il prossimo ciò che apparentemente sarebbe loro negato per forza." (272)

a personified and concrete presence. Finally, this ‘new’ witch, in contrast to most of the authors’ contemporaries, Sprenger and Kramer suggest that witches are exclusively female. Not only is the insatiable sexual appetite of women the root cause of witchcraft, but also defining witches as women allows them to create a new *modisaparendis* in which any deviation in gender roles or sexual practices could be associated with the devil and witchcraft. Consequently any problem with social and/or political hierarchies could be attributed to women and their sins. Demons, Devils, and gossiping women who congregate with other women, based upon the authors’ line of reasoning, may be seen as creatures that “entice and allure the innocent to the increase of that horrid craft and company,” (Kramer and Sprenger 96) the witches prey upon young girls as they are “more given to bodily lusts and pleasures, they observe a different method, working through their carnal desires and the pleasures of the flesh” (97).

Stephans suggests that applying contemporary theories such as psychoanalysis to the texts of demonologists is counterproductive, as this first requires an understanding of just what it was that people such as Kramer and Sprenger “were arguing for” (32). In his chapter, which I suggest is quite misleading in its title “Why Women?: The *Malleus Maleficarum*,” Stephans incessantly, though unsuccessfully, attempts to exculpate the text and the authors of any misogynist ideas or attitudes. Stephans claims that to focus upon supposed woman hating in the *Malleus* is a misapprehension of the text’s antecedents in terms of its “medieval theology and philosophy” (33). Some of the misapprehension, it is suggested by Stephans, derives from the translations of the text, and particularly the over reliance on Chapter I Question VI that deals with all that is evil about women. Stuart Clark adds to the discussion by claiming that those who wish to bring a feminist agenda

to their reading of the *Malleus* do so by only reading and commenting upon sections of the text that deal with women. I find this assertion quite disconcerting as it not only detracts from the social realities of the time, it also attempts to discount contemporary research that attests to the misogynist attitude of the *Malleus*. Contrary to the claims that it is only Chapter I Question VI that deals directly with women, a quick perusal of the *Malleus* easily generates many relevant sections. For example:

...in conclusion, finally, it can be said that these Incubus devils will not only infest those women who have been generated by means of such abominations, or those who have been offered to them by midwives, but that they try with all their might, by means of witches who are bawds or hot whores, to seduce all the devout and chaste maidens in the whole district or town. (114)

It is important to note that this quotation is from Part II, Question. I, Chapter. V, of the *Malleus*, and not Chapter I Question VI as is alluded to by Stephans.

As will be evident in the case studies examined in chapter 3, to be a woman and to be poor, leaves one in a very dangerous and precarious position. If one adds to the equation a woman who is thought to be problematic or rebellious in nature, the probability of being accused of witchcraft increases. It is important to note that a problematic woman could be one that was a midwife, one that was newly destitute, a woman who never married, and generally speaking, one that did not perform her gender in accordance with the expectations of her social and/or economic class. Though some authors do still suggest that demonological texts such as the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the *Compendium Maleficarum*, and *Strix* should not be read as misogynist texts and should not be interpreted using contemporary literary theory, I suggest that this is the most

effective way for understanding the impact of the socio-economic climate of early modern Italy and England upon its citizens. If one examines the visual culture of the time, it becomes apparent that the witch (in part due to the influence of such demonological writings and vice-versa) is woman, and one may come to a more well-rounded understanding of the witch's role in these specific socio-cultural contexts.

Chapter Two:

Witches in the Cultural Imaginary: Self and Other in the Visual Field

Constructive scientific activities see themselves and represent themselves to be autonomous, and their thinking deliberately reduces itself to data-collecting techniques which it has invented. To think is thus to test out, to operate, to transform-the only restriction being that this activity is regulated by an experimental control that admits only the most “worked-up” phenomena, more likely produced by the apparatus than recorded by it. (Merleau-Ponty 121-22)

And thus appears the artist or the person who records a visual representation of that which the cultural imaginary has so dolefully carried in its womb only to be birthed as the face of fear and hatred. The quote from Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s evocative “Eye and Mind,” demonstrates that it is by virtue of the question or hypothesis of the seeker that the problem emerges, or dare I say, is created. Similarly to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, most so-called witch-hunting manuals sought to provide a profile of what constitutes the physical, sexual, and social attributes of ‘witches’ not by providing any legitimate investigation into the topic, but rather by creating a figure that represents an amalgamation of all that is considered abhorrent and egregious in accordance with the temporal and geographic specificity of the text. The artist, then, is given the task of providing citizens with a visual representation of that which they are told they should fear: “art, especially painting, draws upon th[e] fabric of brute meaning which operationalism would prefer to ignore. Art and only art does so in full innocence” (Merleau-Ponty 123). Though I do not agree entirely with Merleau-Ponty that artistic representation is the only form that may represent being in “full innocence,” I do suggest

that visual art has the capability and capacity to represent the world in such a way as to make evident the constructed nature of understanding self and other, in the world.

Some of the ways in which visual artists of the early modern period represented the discourses surrounding witches and their activities are Albrecht Dürer, Hans Baldun Grien, Salvatore Rosa, Agostino Veneziano and Francesco Maria Guazzo. Though there are an abundance of artists who chose to make witches and the supernatural a reoccurring theme of their work, I have chosen to focus on these artists primarily because of their strict adherence to very gender and sex-specific representations of witches.

Though it is suggested by Margaret A. Sullivan that the *Malleus Maleficarum* could not have informed Albrecht Dürer's imaginings of the supernatural, for it was only available in Latin, and Dürer supposedly did not read Latin. I find this suggestion not only reductive, but also easily refutable. It must be remembered that most tales were transmitted orally, therefore negating the need for a person to be literate, let alone be proficient in Latin. Regardless, my aim is not to prove or disprove Dürer's knowledge of texts such as Alfonso Tostato's *Commentaria* (c. 1400-1455) or Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum*, but rather to demonstrate that Dürer's iconography of the witch was in direct dialogue with the prevailing discourse of the early modern period in Europe.

Certainly in dialogue with, if not informed and inspired by texts such as the *Malleus* and the *Commentario*, Albrecht Dürer's work provides prime examples of the visual representation of the witch. As is suggested by Lorenzi, it is during the Renaissance that one may see the changing iconography between the Medusa figure, and that of the Lamia (66). Lorenzi provides very interesting, though I suggest superficial,

readings of Dürer's work. Often at odds with himself, Lorenzi shifts his interpretation of *The Four Witches* from iconographic representations of the Lamia, to that of the Medusa. What the author fails to do is acknowledge that most of Dürer's 'witch paintings' depict witches in a fashion that is very closely related to the teachings of the *Malleus*, and that they visually reinforce misogynistic stereotypes relating to both age and class.

Dorinda Neave notes that visual representations of witches before 1450 are very rare, as witchcraft as a concept emerged near the end of the 15th century (4). It is around this time that depictions of witches in art begin to emerge, particularly in Germany. As is evident throughout the *Malleus*, there is a preoccupation with older women and their supposed powers. This, as I have suggested in the previous chapter, can be related to women's roles as possible objects of male desire, as well as their position within their communities. As older women were usually widows, they often saw increased freedom, through greater economic dependence. It is because of such predicaments that older women were thought to be "inflamed with malice or rage" (Neave 4). It is important to note that the witches of the *Malleus*, as well as those of Dürer's *Witch Riding Backward on Goat*⁴ are not all weak or frail. Rather, they are strong and diabolical in their schemes. As I have argued in the previous chapter, the reasoning behind why it is that women are more susceptible than men to the dark arts is a definite way of assuring adherence to specific gender roles. One rather significant aspect of women's so-called vice is their speech. This is not at all surprising if one takes into consideration the fact that the 'ideal' wife and woman that is described by Sprenger and Kramer is one that is silent, for it is with her voice that she may tempt, seduce, and generally lead men astray. This aspect of a woman's evil ways is exemplified in the following passage of the *Malleus*:

⁴Engraving, 115x70 mm. Kupferstichkapinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. c. 1500-1501. See fig. 1.

Let us consider another property of hers, the voice. For as she is a liar by nature, so in her speech she stings while she delights us. Wherefore her sweet voice is like the song of the Sirens, who with their sweet melody entice the passers-by and kill them. For they kill them by emptying their purses, consuming their strength, and causing them to forsake God. (121)

Neave argues that it is in this vein that one may understand Dürer's *Witch Riding Backward on Goat*, (fig. 1) as the woman's mouth is open. Also of importance is the fact that the witch is female, haggard looking, and naked. The 'new witch' of the *Malleus* is exclusively female, something that is in contrast to most of the author's contemporaries, and she is sexually wanton. These are qualities that are evident in Dürer's engravings and which may have been inspired by the texts that were circulated during that time. While Dürer's older witch appropriates male power via the phallic staff that she holds as she quite literally grabs the bull by the horns, *The Four Witches* (see fig. 2) and *The Dream of the Learned Man* (see fig. 3) may actually be more cautionary in nature, as such Lamia-like figures may easily prey on unsuspecting men. *The Dream of the Learned Man* depicts an undressed young woman and an older man who seems to be sleeping. Even in his dreams, the young woman torments the man with thoughts of sexual escapades that distract him from his scholarly duties. The devil lies directly on the young woman's shoulder, perhaps guiding her while she tempts the scholar with her beauty. If one is not familiar with traditional iconography associated with visual representations of witches, one may easily dismiss this engraving as that of a young woman tempting a man with her beauty, but Lorenzi draws the reader's attention to the sphere that is at the bottom of the drawing near the cherub: "The sphere being one of the objects frequently

found at the Witches' Sabbath" (80). As is often noted in the *Malleus*, witches, by means of Sprenger's and Kramer's instructional findings, are officially blessed by demonic forces, with the capacity of flight. What I see as Dürer's dialogue (by means of his paintings) with the findings of demonologists is exemplified in works such as *Witches Flying Backwards on Goat*, *Witch as an Evocation of the World Turned Upside Down*, (see fig. 4) and *The Four Witches*.

It is no wonder that various artists in early modern Europe chose the witch as their muse, especially when one situates the visual representation of the witch with that of the female nude. This 'new' artistic subject gave way to different venues of imaginative expression, while also providing a platform for social and religious dialogue. As is further discussed by Linda C. Hults, the woman as witch motif during the early modern era in Europe, became an "embodiment of the undisciplined and dangerous nature of female imagination, curiosity, and bodily desires, she became an index of the inventive capacity, intellect, and thus the heightened status of the male artist" ("Inventing," 36). Certainly, it is quite a sad state of affairs when artistic innovation and invention are based upon, and inspired by, the persecution of women. As we have seen in Dürer's work, there is often a dichotomous relationship between the female body being represented as grotesque and otherwise unappealing, and one that is perhaps far too appealing and therefore problematic. In either representation, the female body is dangerous. Mikhail Bakhtin's⁵ theory of the grotesque body is one that understands the body as being always in-process, unclean, disorderly, and a generally chaotic. Though Hults aptly relates Bakhtin's "grotesque body" to something that centres upon discussions and

⁵ See Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Austin: U of Texas P., 1981.

classifications of social status, I suggest that it is just as productive to relate the concept to women and witches, as they correspond to the corporeal as well as to a class-specific designation of presumed witches. As is noted by Luisa Accati, while in the Middle Ages the aristocracy had once constructed the male phallic body as grotesque and in need of discipline, the early modern intellectuals designated the female uterine body as unruly.

Often heralded as the prototype of the witch, Albrecht Dürer's *Witch Riding Backward on Goat* served not only as an inspiration for many artists such as Hans Baldung Grien, but also exemplified early modern preoccupations with the life cycle, and particularly with women, age, and what was perceived as unruly behaviour. The image of the older woman, often termed the 'hag,' certainly has seen an enduring life. Why the image has persisted in prevalence and usage in early modern representations of witches may be due to what Charles Zika suggests is the function of such as image. Zika sees Dürer's representational function of the hag as that of social unrest and the inversion of assigned gender roles. I suggest that one of the main functions of the *Malleus* and other witch hunting texts was to serve as a type of conduct manual for how to identify and deal with unruly women. Therefore, it is no surprise that any deviance from prescribed gender roles was seen as problematic, as well as artistic fodder. Early modern thinking defined woman as a product of her body, and the female body can represent chaos and disorder.

Hans Buldung Grien, a pupil of Dürer, exemplifies the perceived chaotic and generally abject nature of the female body in prints, such as *Seated Woman Defecating*⁶ (1513). Though this print is not part of Grien's witch collection, it does show a

⁶ Red Chalk Drawing, 1513, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. See fig. 5.

preoccupation with the abject body. In *The Powers of Horror*⁷, Julia Kristeva discusses the abject in relation to woman and the maternal body. Kristeva, according to Barbara Creed, views the maternal body as a site of conflicting desires. The menstrual is also discussed in terms of that which pollutes from the inside and is discussed in relation to the entrance into the symbolic via that which is abjected. Creed goes on to suggest that though blood is already seen as abject, the female blood is even more so because of three reasons: first, menstrual blood is a threat to “the identity of each sex in the face of sexual difference;” second, woman’s blood visually identifies her fertility; and third, woman’s blood reminds men that they are capable and even willing to murder other men (Kristeva 102). The entrance of the female body in the form of a witch within this already primal scene makes “abjection [be] everywhere (Creed 13).

It is within this framework that one may situate Kristeva’s discussion of the abject, and more specifically, woman as abject. As is noted by Creed in “Kristeva, Femininity, Abjection,” the notion of the abject is in relation to “ancient religious and historical notions of abjection” (9). The subject is always plagued by abjection because that which is abjected is also desired (the female witch’s power, her sexualized body, and her ability to circumvent the laws of her society), but the subject must repel such desires for fear of being destroyed. Ultimately, all such anxiety, fear, and attraction relates to the way in which a cultural narrative is constructed. In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger states that a text or visual representation does not represent reality as it actually is, but rather is a constructed way of seeing the world. The image is constructed by the historical

⁷ See Julia Kristeva’s *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* for further development of topic vis-à-vis marginalization, phallic signifier, Lacan and Freud.

moment in which it is produced, the society that produced it, and the ideologies of said society.

In *Witches Preparing for the Sabbath Flight*⁸ (both 1514 versions) there is an evident conflation of the female body and the abject. It is important to note that, if the woman is young and attractive, her body is among the visual cues that are indicative of her counter-normative activities. In both prints one sees skulls and other bones laying about, animals such as cats and other familiars, as well as other visual cues such as swollen breasts, which may indicate lactation or sexual arousal. Often the women seem to be in a state of ecstasy and/or actively engaging in same-sex arousal or masturbation. *Three Witches*,⁹ also referred to as *New Year's Wish* (1514), illustrates an all female orgy-like scenario that involves what seem to be two younger women engaging in sexual activity that is mediated by an older woman. Is one to understand that this is women's New Year's wish? Though I am consciously being fastidious, I do suggest that such questions need to be asked in order to better understand the motivations behind such visual representations. Identity, in relation to gender bending has historically been the cause of great anxiety in English society. The pamphlets *Haec Vir: The Womanish-Man*¹⁰ (1620) and *Hic Mulier: The Man-Woman*¹¹ (1620) discuss the "deformity never dreamed of" for such women have made themselves, the author suggests, "stranger things than ever Noah's Ark unloaded or Nile engendered...you are stranger than strangeness itself" (author unknown, in *Half Human Kind*, 266). Perhaps such views also informed

⁸ Chiaroscuro pen drawing on reddish-brown tinted paper, 287x206 mm, Albertina Museum, Vienna. See fig. 6 & 6b.

⁹ Ibid., See fig. 7.

¹⁰ See fig. 22 & 23 for frontispiece from the text *Half Human Kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*. p. 264 & 277.

Grien and his contemporaries' understanding of women and gender performance.

Lorenzi suggests that Dürer's *The Four Witches* is not be associated with the "classical Lamia or the Biblical Herodias" as is the case in Alfonso Tostatos's text, but rather with Diana the Huntress, for she is representative of both courage and intellect (62). If this is indeed the case, then Dürer's engraving becomes all the more problematic and shows even greater adherence to, and dialogue between, popular beliefs regarding the supernatural and texts such as the *Malleus*.

Though Zika suggests that Dürer's as well as Baldung's work should not be read in the context of witch-hunting manuals such as the *Malleus*, Hults aptly draws the reader's attention to the fact that Baldung's Freiburg drawings¹¹ were produced less than thirty years after the *Malleus*' first publication in 1486, and in "one of its major geographical centres-the upper Rhineland" (82). It is interesting to note that from the time of the Freiburg to the time of Baldung's death in 1545, his interest in the depiction of witches seems to have waned. This may be attributed to a general decline in interest in the supernatural, which may also be seen in the eventual stop in the publication of the *Malleus* in 1521. It was in 1576 that the text once again became a prominent fixture in demonology-related writings (82).

In his reading of Baldung's *The Witches*¹², Lorenzi draws the viewer's attention to the fact that one is presented with a general nudity. That is to say, one is given a full view of the all of the witches' bodies, regardless of age and/or beauty. Lorenzi states that, though several witches are depicted as being old and haggard, "the artist has not neglected to provide her with a suggestion of curves and even her face, though lined and

¹¹ Freiburg drawings is a term ascribed to Baldung's chiaroscuro drawings produced in Freiburg Germany from 1512 to 1516.

¹² Chiaroscuro Bertarelli Collection, Sforza Castle, Milan. 1510. See fig. 8.

gaunt, gives us a glimpse of her once radiant beauty” (84). The only figure that is depicted as undeniably hideous is that of what may be a leader or priestess situated in the centre of the scene, holding a plate above her head. At this point, I move away from Lorenzi’s interpretation of such a figure, for he suggests that this exemplifies the naked body as not something of pleasure, but as duty towards the devil. I propose that the older woman represents the binding force that unites women of all ages and indicates a passing of generations. She, too, may once have been the attractive young Lamia figure, but her now aged body represents maturity and knowledge; something that women should not possess, for both may lead to (and in this case do) rebellious activities. As is noted by Lorenzi and art historians, long hair is often a symbol for sensuality and sexual attraction, as are the figures of voluptuous women. It is important to note that, though the older woman in the drawing does indeed display a body that is not plump and rounded, her breasts are the only ones that are clearly on display and possibly indicate arousal. Therefore, perhaps it is indeed the older of the women who is the prime example of men’s fear of female sexuality and power, for even in her supposedly ‘haggard’ body, she is still powerful and endowed with sexual desire/ (desirability?). In *Young Witch and Dragon (or Demon)*¹³, *Happy New Year to the Clerics*, and *Witches in Ecstasy*¹⁴ one may see a visual representation of the textual accounts of the *Malleus*. Witches, and women in general, as is discussed in demonological texts, are lustful and therefore easily fall prey to the dark arts, for their sexual desires are presumably insatiable. As Hults argues in “Inventing the Witch,” the notion of women’s unbridled lust may be attributed to the very real situation concerning women’s social welfare. As the marrying age for women was

¹³Chiaroscuro pen drawing on brown-tinted paper, 295x207mm, 1515. See fig. 9.

¹⁴ Drawing, pen and tempera on green paper, Cabinet des Dessins, Musee du Louver, Paris. See fig. 6. Also referred to as “witches preparing for the Sabbath flight.”

on the rise in the early modern period, women who were not married might presumably turn to the dark arts in order to find a husband or to seek vengeance for a lost fiancé. Dresen-Coens asserts that the *Malleus* exemplified patriarchal religious institutions' emphasis on the control over marriages and sexual activity (in Hults "Inventing the Witch" 54).

In Part 1 Question 6 of the *Malleus*, the reader is instructed on why it is that women are the ones who are primarily tempted by, and addicted to, the dark arts with the culmination of their allegiance seen in their copulation with the Devil. As to why it is that women are more prone to the evil ways of the devil, as has been exemplified in the artistic renditions that have been discussed thus far, it is a woman's insatiable lust and her generally diminished mental capacity. The type of woman who is most induced to such a way of life is one that is inclined to the following vices:

infidelity, ambition, and lust... [a]gain, since of these three vices the last chiefly predominates, women being insatiable, etc., it follows that those among ambitious women are more deeply infected who are more hot to satisfy their filthy lusts; and such are adulteresses, fornicatresses, and the concubines of the Great. (29)

A very complicated, and at times tumultuous, relationship exists between the early modern artist's self-fashioning in terms of his contemporaries and his predecessors (I purposely use the masculine pronoun as most, if not all, early modern artists whose work was and is acknowledged, are male) as well as between innovation and socio-religious dialogue with current understandings of gender, sexuality, and religious discourses.

Agostino Veneziano's *Lo Stregozzo*¹⁵, also referred to as *The Carcass* and *The Witches' Procession*, (c. 1520) is in direct visual dialogue with Italian art theory and tradition, as

¹⁵ Copper engraving on ivory-coloured paper, 31.4 x 62.5cm c. 1520. See fig. 10.

well as with contemporary social beliefs regarding women's susceptibility to and roles within the dissemination of evil. *Lo Stregozzo* is also reflective of Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's (1469-1533) *Strix, sive de Ludeficatione Daemonum* (published in 1523) in its original Latin version, only to be translated into Italian by Leandro Alberti the subsequent year under the title of *Strige, o delle illusioni del demonio*. A key difference between the Germanic influences of Dürer and Baldung Grien, and those of the Italian artists is the understanding of men's role in demonic ventures. In the Italian text by Pico, we are provided with interviews between witches and their inquisitors. It is in such retellings of their adventures that witches point to the role of their male counterparts in their demonic gatherings. The women do not tell of their associations with other women, but rather of the allure of very handsome men who serve as their lovers as well as their temptors. The actual women or witches are not discussed at any great length in Pico's text. This is what may have inspired Veneziano's depiction of the demonic in *Lo Stregozzo*, as well as other artistic traditions, such as that of Michelangelo's angels. It is important to note that the male nude features much more prominently in Veneziano's work on the supernatural than does any clear representation of the female sexualized body. In accordance to my argument in regards to the social and economic status of presumed witches, Pico's text clearly states that witches are typically of low social and economic class, and presumably one is to take from this that such people are commonly inarticulate, and therefore, their testimony is unreliable.

In her article on *Lo Stregozzo*, Patricia Emison discusses Pico's text in light of the discourses surrounding male beauty. Emison states that the text indicates a suspicion of male beauty and that it "plays an important part in the devil's seduction, almost as though

beauty, and especially male beauty, were a sign of the Devil” (630). That being said, it is not surprising that, in the Mirandola case¹⁶, more men than women were persecuted, and among such instances, one priest was executed as well as seven other men. Pico’s text is a response to such events that took place between 1522 and 1523 in the town of Mirandola in Modena (Emison). Though I certainly agree that there is a connection between the Mirandola text and Veneziano’s *Lo Stregozzo*, I disagree with Emison’s interpretation of the significance of the male nude. Emison suggests that, “the presence of male beauty ensures that the viewer understands how the witch was tempted; the juxtaposition of female ugliness helps protect the viewer from himself feeling tempted” and later comes to the conclusion that, “[t]he male nudes function to tempt neither male nor female viewers but to indicate how the witch perceived the devil as attractive” (631). Emison primarily attributes that lack of implied temptation to the fact that the faces and bodies of the figures tend to be obscured or veiled. I suggest that the obscuring of actual discernable features may be read as the general temptation of lust and what may be perceived as deviant sexuality. If Veneziano’s painting is juxtaposed with that of his Germanic predecessors, such as Grien and Dürer, it is evident that there is a preoccupation with same-sex desire and the temptation of such desires. While Dürer and especially Grien are preoccupied with same-sex desire amongst women, Veneziano warns of the temptations of male same-sex desire. I certainly do not think that this is a notion that is not plausible, especially if one takes into consideration the great emphasis that is placed upon the male nude and male beauty in Italian Renaissance art. Also, one of the seminal Italian texts on the activities of witches (*Il Strix* or *La Strega*) attests to the dangers of male beauty. In *Lo Stregozzo*, it is men who congregate and demonstrate their

¹⁶ See Patricia Emison’s article for a greater discussion and explanation of the Mirandola case.

sexual inhibitions, not women. In this scenario, men are free to express their homosexual desires. Therefore, Veneziano's painting may be a warning of the dangers of such unions, while also demonstrating the absurdity of depicting same-sex desire as an association with the dark side. Ultimately, the greatness of Veneziano's *Lo Stregozzo* lies in the triumph of the imagination. Who is it that one is to fear? Perhaps it is indeed the beautiful men and not the haggard women. It is the men who persecute and kill presumed witches, and perhaps all the while leading them (men and women) to commit such heinous crimes because of their own fears and insecurities.

Born in Naples in 1615, Salvatore Rosa is often discussed in terms of his rebellious nature, as he removed himself from a long line of patronage that was common among his predecessors. Rosa was on a quest for artistic autonomy (Hults, *The Witch as Muse* 176). Rosa's *Scene with Witches: Day*¹⁷ (1640's) and *Scene with Witches: Morning*¹⁸ (1640), claims Hults, are more of a representation of Rosa himself than of the witches he paints. That is to say that the paintings could be read as satire, but Hults is quick to point to the fact that, though there is scholarship that supports this idea, no one is clear as to whom the satire is was directed toward. In *La Poesia*, Rosa writes: "Oh! Take up the whip, close your eyes, and whoever gets hit gets hit: Let this uncouth rabble feel the scourge" (In Hults, *The Witch as Muse* 181). Hults suggests that this line is directed at the typical buyer who purchased Rosa's paintings. Though this may in fact be true, I suggest that one may also read this as a satirical response to the condemnation of supposed witches. Older, and especially poor, women were often blamed for the misfortunes of their better-off neighbours. This is particularly relevant if one takes into

¹⁷ Oil on canvas, 54.5 cm diameter. See fig. 11.

¹⁸ Ibid., See fig. 12.

account the subject matter of Rosa's paintings and the social and economic realities of accused witches. When something does not bode well, blame the person who is unable to defend herself. That is to say someone who is alone, poor, and in need of the goodwill of her neighbours in order to survive. "Close your eyes, and whoever gets hit gets hit." (Hults 182)

The Cleveland Tondi¹⁹ reflect Rosa's iconographic representation of witches and witchcraft. Four of the central tenets of supernatural activities are represented in the Tondi: "transformation, levitation, love magic, and the invocation of demons" (Hults *The Witch as Muse* 182). It is interesting to note that, even though the *Malleus* was written in part by a Dominican friar and was given papal endorsement, the mode in which trials were conducted, as is claimed by Hults, was much more controlled in Italy than it was in northern Europe. Though the documents that I discuss in the subsequent chapter do not necessarily follow Hults' line of reasoning, it is still important to keep in mind that witches in Italy were discussed and imagined in terms of their actions and specific misdeeds or *malefica* and not by their physical characteristics. Rosa, evidently influenced by the Northern European school, chose to depict witches in a fashion reminiscent of Dürer and Grien.

In *Scene of Witchcraft*²⁰ and *Witches at their Incantation*²¹, there is certainly more of a Northern European influence, for Rosa has not turned his attention to the female witch and eliminated the presence of the male witch or sorcerer. *Witches at their*

¹⁹ The Cleveland Tondi refers to Rosa's four oval shaped paintings housed at The Cleveland Museum of Art. The Tondi are comprised of *Scene with Witches: Morning* (1640s), *Scene with Witches: Day* (1640s), *Scene with Witches: Evening*, and *Scene with witches: Night*. The tondi are thought to be accompanying pieces to Rosa's own poetry and in reference to classical literature.

²⁰ Oil on canvas, 76 x 65 cm. Corsini Collection, Florence. Mid 1540s. See fig. 13.

²¹ Oil on canvas, 72.5 x 132.5 cm. National Gallery, London. ca. 1646. See fig. 14.

Incantation is one of Rosa's most controversial of paintings, as it was often covered in order to not offend certain visitors (Hults, "Baldung" 253). Similarly to Veneziano, Rosa also plays to the importance and pre-eminence of the imagination over intellect (Lorenzi 114). In *Witch*²², Rosa depicts an aged woman who reads a book in the dimness of candlelight. The woman is evidently literate as she uses her intellectual capacities, inspired by her creativity, to inform herself of "mortal incantations" (Lorenzi 114), or perhaps I suggest she may be informing herself of what to avoid in order to not be understood as a witch.

Though arguably not particularly innovative in its content, Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* was Italy's most comprehensive guide to witchcraft and sorcery. Published in 1608, the *Compendium*'s distinguishing features are the numerous illustrations that accompany descriptions of witches' activities. As is noted by Brian P. Levack, the *Compendium* provides its readers "with an important visual supplement to the fantasies he was describing" (*The Witch-Hunt* 57). Levack goes on to observe that, similarly to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the *Compendium*'s readership was somewhat limited, such treatises did indeed succeed in making the literate elite aware of the 'realities' of witchcraft and the demonic. It is precisely because of who had access to such texts (literate elite: lawyers, judges, magistrates, etc.) that the persecution and condemnation of supposed witches was possible. Though the involvement of such people was imperative to the witch-hunts, it was also necessary for those of the lower classes to participate in the accusations, if one takes into consideration that most accusations were made by neighbours and relatives.

²² Oil on Canvas. See fig. 15

Gary K. Waite notes that, even though witch-hunting manuals such as the *Compendium* did circulate in Italy, witch persecution was relatively lax in Rome, Venice, Spain, and Portugal. Though some of the earliest witch trials did indeed occur in Italy, the trials were at their height in 1550. It was only in the Friuli area of Northern Italy that such trials continued thereafter. Waite describes the trials as being aimed at conversion and penance rather than death. It was only the “recalcitrant and repeat offenders [who] were treated harshly” (201-02). Interestingly, Guazzo was asked to provide information on witchery and sorcery by Duke John Williams of Cleves, who thought that the dark arts were being used against him by a man who had committed suicide while in prison.

Guazzo’s illustrations, like his text, describe the intricate details of what he understood as being part of witches’ demonic activities. In the first illustration, Guazzo depicts the cannibalistic side of sorcery as well as infanticide. The woodcut shows a baby being prepared to be roasted on a spit, while another child is being held over a boiling pot.²³ In another woodcut, Guazzo, perhaps in the vein of Grien’s earlier work, illustrates the sexual aspects of pleasuring the devil. Here the anus is emphasised, as it is in numerous illustrations that deal with sexuality and the demonic. It is important to note that, similarly to Veneziano’s paintings, women as well as men are involved with the Devil. In this 1626 woodcut, there is a woman who is seemingly prepared to kiss the Devil’s anus, but there is also a crowd of men and women behind her, presumably also waiting to pleasure the creature.²⁴ As Lyndal Roper notes, “[s]ex and marriage were, at their most basic, about possession. At the heart of the bargain with the Devil lay the promise, made in marriage as in the diabolic pact, that ‘you are mine’...marriage meant

²³ Illustration in *Compendium Maleficarum*, Milan 1626: wood cut. See fig. 16.

²⁴ Ibid., see fig. 17.

being owned by another, giving sex with the expectation of economic support” (94).

Other aspects of the supernatural that are discussed and visually illustrated in Guazzo’s *Compendium* are the Sabbaths and flight. In the third illustration²⁵, there is a clear reference to the preparations for the Sabbath. Though Roper suggests that the creature flying on the goat is a witch (Roper 105), I argue that it is the Devil himself guiding his followers to their subsequent gathering. In addition to the Sabbaths, it was believed that witches also congregated in the woods and danced with the Devil himself, or in order to conjure a supernatural entity. This is very interesting as dances “punctuated social life in town and country” (Roper 111). Though such social gatherings often highlighted the participants’ social status, they also had the potential of undermining social expectations and boundaries. While the elite had musicians who were part of their entourage, small villages often relied on travelling musicians who were unknown to them and, therefore, of possibly suspicious origin. Ultimately, such gatherings were a time of reprieve from the daily routine of village life. Guazzo’s woodcut²⁶ shows men and women dancing in a circle with two demonic creatures, while a young man plays a musical instrument. Though it is not discernible from the woodcut, Guazzo suggests in the *Compendium* that witches dance counter-clockwise as the left is associated with the Devil. Another scene depicting a Sabbath gathering shows all those in attendance eating and feasting with numerous Devil-like figures²⁷. I suggest that this may be interpreted as a play upon *The Last Supper*. Guazzo’s *Compendium* also discusses diabolical baptism, which he illustrates by showing a Devil pouring water over one man as a crowd waits behind the

²⁵ Ibid., see Fig. 18.

²⁶ Ibid., see Fig. 19.

²⁷ Ibid., see Fig. 20.

first to be 'blessed.'²⁸ Perhaps this may also be related to pouring holy water over people believed to be possessed by evil beings: "[W]itches' confessions were not just the product of demonologists' fantasies" (Roper 112). One might say that works of demonology were also the product of the witches' fantasies. Just as fantasy is required to paint visual representations of that which is supernatural, so the imagination is the driving force behind that which constitutes sorcery. This type of fantasy is no better illustrated than in the trial documents of accused witches.

²⁸ Ibid., See Fig. 21.

Chapter Three

“Non Lasciare Vivere la Malefica:” Witches at their Trials

In this chapter four trials will be discussed and examined in light of current theoretical perspectives that seek to shed light upon the social, economic, and, political motivations behind accusations of and prosecutions for witchcraft. As is noted by Robyn Wiegman and Judith Roof, often, when a community experiences great anxieties and uncertainties, it tends to employ a minoritizing discourse whereby members of a dominant group claim to be marginalized, persecuted and generally disempowered. This methodology permits the dominant group to deny and obfuscate the current relations of power. It is within this framework that I analyse the following trials: “A pitiless Mother” (1616), “The Wonderful Discovery of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Philippa Fowler” (1619), “Magic and Poison: The Trial of Chiaretta and Fedele” (circa 1550), and the “The Case of Benvegnuda Pincinella: Medicine Woman or Witch” (1518).

During the early modern period, most of the people accused of witchcraft in England were women and of said women, most were of the lower class. It is interesting to note that, if someone defended the accused witch, he/she would often be accused of conspiring with the alleged witch. When one takes into account the physical and psychological torture that was inflicted upon the accused, it is not surprising that only about 10% did not confess to their ‘crime.’ The fact that most people who were accused of witchcraft were indeed financially disadvantaged, is not at all coincidental. Under feudalism, the lord typically took care of his citizens when they became aged or incapacitated, as did the Catholic Church. With the waning of Catholicism in England during the early modern period, the Church no longer had great power or monetary

abundance. It is because of the economic shift from feudalism to primitive accumulation, and then to capitalism, that those who were not able to sell their labour power for a salary could no longer survive by their own gains. At this point, the poor were seen as nuisances by the governing body as well as by society, and were ultimately viewed with suspicion. Vagrancy, or at least what was perceived as such, had to either be contained or destroyed, and poor, old women often found themselves within this category. As will become evident in the subsequent case studies, guilt, anxiety, projection of social norms, economic imbalance, and political mobility are often the motivating factors behind accusations of witchcraft and sorcery.

“The Wonderful Discovery of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Philippa Flower, daughters of John Flower, near Belvoir Castle; Executed at Lincoln March 11, 1619.”

The case of Margaret and Philippa Flower begins with an introduction to the tale that outlines the kind-hearted nature of the Earl of Rutland. The Earl, upon receipt of Belvoir Castle and all of his domains, did not dismiss any of the servants, nor evict previous tenants. Rather, he gave lodgings to all, and ensured that all of the townspeople were taken care of (Henderson et. al., “Wonderful” 371). Here we are introduced to Margaret and Philippa, the women had been rescued from poverty and given employment within the domestic sphere of the Castle. Margaret tended to the poultry and did the laundering. Though this arrangement had worked well for some time, the townspeople began to gossip about the conduct of the Flower women, and relayed this information to the Lady of the house. The information relayed to the Earl and his Lady first concerned Joan Flower, the mother of the two young women. She was generally labeled an atheist:

“her eyes were fiery and hollow, her speech fell and envious, her demeanor strange and exotic, and her conversations sequestered, so that the whole course of her life gave great suspicion that she was a notorious witch” (372). My question at this point is: If this woman, Joan Flower, had indeed always given way to suspicion, why was it at that particular moment in time that the citizens of Rutland became so concerned? My answer is one that is very simple, and most plausible—the Flowers’s neighbours were envious of their recent good fortune. As is made evident in the preceding paragraph of the case, Joan often quarreled with her neighbours and was rather vitriolic in her choice of words.

Though Margaret’s suspicious activities were apparently less grave in nature, they were nonetheless problematic for her masters. It was reported that Margaret often visited her mother and brought her provisions from her Countess’s castle. Certainly an accusation of thievery would upset any employer, let alone one that gives her servants full access to her home as well as her family. What is interesting to note is that the accusation also involves the type of company the women kept. One of the issues was with a “certain debauched and base company that frequented this Joan Flower’s house...and especially her youngest daughter” (372). As for Philippa, it was assumed that she had bewitched her lover Thomas Simpson. This accusation is part and parcel with the belief that women often resorted to magic in order to win the love of a particular young man.

After all of the accusations, the Countess eventually did deem the private life of Margaret to be one of questionable morals, and did find her work to be lacking. She eventually let the young woman go. Certainly, Margaret and her mother Joan were not at all pleased with the occurrence, and verbally demonstrated their hatred towards the Earl

and his wife. Even the Flowers's neighbours no longer wanted to associate with them because of their sentiments regarding the Earl. As has been discussed in the preceding chapter, in almost all demonological texts, we are informed that the Devil takes advantage of those who are needy. It is at this point that the Devil tempts the Flowers with the promise of revenge and the ability to fulfill all of their desires.

The rituals that are depicted in the visual representations of Guazzo, Baldung Grien, and Durer are all attributed to the actions of the Flowers. The women are reported to have had the usual familiars (cats, mice, etc.) by their side, and to have made pacts with the Devil, often sealed with a kiss. Along with the neighbours' accusations, Philippa Flower corroborated the stories by saying that she herself often saw her mother "boil feathers and blood together using many Devilish speeches and strange gestures" (377). By the end of the trial, we are told that Margaret confessed to everything and that she, along with her mother and sister, was responsible for the death of Lord Ros, as well as all of the family's illnesses, and for the Earl's and Duchess's inability to conceive. The women were ultimately convicted of the crime of sorcery.

The case of the Flowers is not at all unique, primarily because women who were in dire financial need habitually depended upon the goodwill of their neighbours. As is discussed by Levack, "women were the weakest and most vulnerable members of society" (*The Witch-Hunt* 150). It is precisely because of women's vulnerability that they were often used as scapegoats for all that ails society. Was the Earl's and his wife's infertility caused by the Flowers? Probably not. Were the illness and death of the couple's child caused by the alleged witches? Again, probably not, but it is far easier and even comforting to believe that all such ills are caused by the malevolence of someone

else, rather than indicative of for example, poor nutrition. Also, because of women's tendency to be left to live in poverty, they would often 'curse' someone or resort to what was deemed sorcery in order to avenge themselves of those who attempted to take from them the little income that they had.

It is important to note that often the witch was also a mother. This is evident in the Flower case, as it is the mother who initially casts a spell against the Earl and his wife for dismissing her daughter. As is discussed by Deborah Willis in "(Un)neighbourly Nurture", the witch was often a mother who wanted many commodities for her children as well as her household, but had little to give her neighbours in return. The accumulation of unrequited good deeds often led to resentment on the part of her neighbours who often had little more than she did. In a climate in which health and well-being was very precarious, it is not surprising that, when a neighbour refused to supply the destitute woman with food or other necessities, any occurrence of ill health would be blamed upon the woman who was angered by their actions:

When neighbours – often but not always other women—put their resentments and their fears into words, they represented the witch as a malevolent mother who used her power to suckle, feed, and nurture a brood of childlike demonic imps in order to bring sickness and death to the households of other women. (Willis, "(Un)neighbourly Nurture" 65)

With the advent of the Reformation in England (1534), there were new and increasing anxieties concerning mothering and motherhood. The elite became more and more weary of the role that women occupied as caretakers of the body. It is important to note that it is during this time that infanticide became a criminal offense. The number of

women prosecuted for their involvement in witchcraft is very similar to that of women who were prosecuted for killing their children. Again, prosecuted cases for infanticide were almost always against women of the lower class. Though midwifery was permitted, such women had to take an oath to not harm or kill children. Even the use of wet-nurses was discouraged, for it was feared that lower class women could not only pass on disease, but might also have passed on “unsatisfactory lower-class character traits” (Willis, “(Un)neighbourly Nurture”⁶⁶) to the child. Generally speaking, the maternal body, and the female body, were sites of fear and anxiety for patriarchy. This may have led to the collective violence experienced by women.

“A Pitiless Mother That most unnaturally at one time murdered two of her own Children at Acton, within six miles of London, upon holy Thursday last. 1616, the ninth of May, being a Gentlewoman named Margaret Vincent, wife of Mr. Jarvis Vincent of the same Town, With her Examination, Confession, and true discovery of all the proceedings in the said bloody accident.”

Accused of murdering two of her youngest children because of the misleading teachings of the Papists, the frontispiece of the text shows a Devil figure watching over the woman as she kills her children. The reader is informed that Margaret is an educated woman who is “discreet, civil, and of modest conversation” (Henderson et. al. “Pitiless Mother” 362). Apparently, Margaret was a very religious woman who often sought the counsel of the clergy, but as of late had fallen into the hands of the “Roman Wolves” (363). It was during this time in England that parliament, under the reign of King Henry VIII separated itself from the Pope in Rome, and the monarch became the political as well as religious leader. During this time, Roman Catholics (also referred to as Papists during the early modern period) were looked upon with suspicion, and often persecuted.

Therefore, Margaret being a woman and a Papist, was under double duress. The author of the pamphlet explains that “they [the Papists] have such charming persuasions that hardly the female kind can escape their enticements, of which weak sex the continually make prize of...” (362). It is noted that Margaret, simply following the teachings of the priests, also tried to convert her husband as well as her acquaintances. She was led to believe that it was her husband who was blinded to the true teachings of God. For all intents and purpose, I suggest that Margaret was used as a scapegoat by all those around her, in order to achieve their religious and political goals.

It is stated throughout the text that the true faith is only that of the Protestants, and that any variance is heresy, and possibly linked to the dark arts and sorcery. Supposedly, the Devil tempts and instructs the Catholics to destroy Protestants by any means necessary, even the murder of one’s own children (so claims the author of the pamphlet in question). Ultimately, it is during a religious feast that Margaret Vincent murders two of her youngest children. The fact that as a woman, she should have been naturally predisposed to caring for her children is stressed throughout the text. The author of the pamphlet states that “[she] by nature should have cherished them with her own body, as the Pelican that pecks her own breast to feed her young ones with her blood” (in Henderson & McManus 364). Within the previous statement, there is an evident naturalizing of motherhood and the role of caretaker for women. The maternal body is something that carries with it an assumption of modes of being, as well as creates fears and anxiety. Certainly, as is evident in many folk tales, urban legends, and veritable news stories, mothers who murder their children are deemed to be particularly heinous.

Similarly to the Mexican myth of La Llorona, Margaret may be understood as the archetypal bad mother and stereotypically evil woman.

The La Llorona is a folk tale with its origins in Latin America. Though the tale has numerous variants based upon the cultural function of the story, generally speaking, it is of a woman who murders or has her children murdered; she subsequently commits suicide, and then haunts the area in which the event took place. The Spanish name La Llorona means “wailing woman” or “crying woman.” Similarly to the legend of the Banshee, it is said that if one hears La Llorona’s cry, one is marked for death.

Tales such as that of La Llorona are emblematic of the “psychological functions” (Jones 195) of mothering and motherhood. Jones explains that the tales of La Llorona serve three central purposes: “the stories released parental frustrations and tensions built up while coping with several children; the stories expressed unconscious anxieties about childcare; and third, the stories spoke about the difficulties for children while living in poverty.” (195) I suggest that similarly to the dynamic tale of La Llorona, stories of mothers murdering their children serve a cautionary function as well an emblematic representation of social realities.

La Llorona is even seen in cinematic representations, such as the television series *Supernatural*, in which a woman who kills her children and then commits suicide haunts the men who pass by a certain stretch of country road. It is important to note that the men whom she terrorizes are men that are swayed by her sexual advances. This is part of the punitive aspect of the tale, as the woman’s husband is said to have cheated on her. The Winchester brothers discover that the only way that she can be stopped is by bringing her back to the scene of the crime and reuniting her with the spirits of her dead children.

Even in this contemporary rendition of the tale, the egregiousness of such a crime is repeatedly stated throughout the episode.

Ultimately, we are informed by the author of the 1616 pamphlet, that Margaret killed her children by strangling them with her own garter, as the other child looked on. The author claims that she would have killed another of her children had he not been in the care of a nurse. Margaret repeatedly claims that she murdered her children in order to save their souls and to make them saints. She subsequently attempted to commit suicide first by hanging herself, and then by drowning, but was stopped by a neighbour just in time. Margaret's claim that this is all her husband's fault is quite interesting and certainly merits further analysis. The woman says: "Oh Jarvis, this had never been done if thou hadst been ruled and by me converted; but what is done is past, for they are Saints in heaven, and I nothing at all repent" (Henderson et. al. "Pitiless" 366).

Up to the very end, Margaret would not take off her crucifix, nor renounce her religion. She even refused to accept the English bible that she was given. Again, it is emphasised that Margaret's religious views and opinions are wrong and that that is what led her to murder her children. I find it very interesting that it never says in the text that the woman is ill or evil herself; rather, it is the Devil who works through the Papists, and that is what has ruined Margaret. The author of the pamphlet ends the text by warning of the evils of the "Popish persuasions" of "that dangerous sect," ; "How easy are the ways unto evil and how soon are our minds (by the Devil's enticement) withdrawn from goodness!" (361).

Magic and Poison: The Trial of Chiaretta and Fedele

As stated by Stephania Malavasi, the circa 350 pages of trial transcripts are well worth the time, for the case of Chiaretta Galese and Fedele dall'Arzere, is one of the most celebrated witch trials in Rovigno in the second half of the 1500s. The case of the two lovers, Chiaretta and Fedele, is a prime example of the social and cultural milieu of one of the most vivacious cultural hubs of the time. The Venetian city of Rovigno had long been plagued by charges of heresy against its citizens and had, therefore, been under the watchful eye of the Santo Ufficio. But that time had long passed, for Venetian authorities had perpetually tried to establish a distinct separation between their authority, and that of the local church. Under the rule of the new Bishop, Lorenzo Laureti (a Carmelite theologian), and his successor, the number of trials against accused witches rose dramatically. Among such cases is that of Chiaretta and Fedele.

The Personages:

Chiaretta was the daughter of Giacomo, a man who, though not among the wealthiest of the town, did make a modest living, and gained in political status through the marriages of his daughters. Giacomo himself also gained status by way of his marriage. Chiaretta married Celio Rana who in his will, left her with a rather large sum of various riches in order to live comfortably, but under the stipulation that she not remarry. Along with the worldly goods that were given to Chiaretta, she was also to ensure that their only son, born before their marriage, was to receive a good education. Several months later, on October 21, 1586, the will was modified to include an extra sign

of goodwill on the part of Celio who, taking into consideration that if he were to perish, Chiaretta would be left to care for a child that was not hers, decides to leave her all of his property, even if she were to remarry, as well as their place in the familial sepulchre in the Church of San Francesco.

With the eventual demise of Celio, Chiaretta began a relationship that was seen as inappropriate for a woman of her social class. Not only was the relationship deemed problematic because of her lover's marital status; it was also seen as an affront to the society that had welcomed her into their social circles and treated her as one of their own. Social and economic status was very important during this time and taken very seriously. Any action that could possibly cast a dark shadow upon a person of 'status' was seen as very inappropriate.

It is at this point that the story of Chiaretta and Fedele begins. Fedele was married at the time, and it is reported that Chiaretta was willing to do anything to rid them of Fedele's wife, even resort to sorcery or "trigaria di donne" (Malavasi 154). Many accusations of witchcraft in Italy during the early modern period revolved around love magic, and the acquisition and maintenance of a lover. The affair between Chiaretta and Fedele was public knowledge and ultimately led to speculations involving Chiaretta's presumed desire to kill her lover's wife with the aid of magic filters and incantations. Because of ramped up accusations made against Chiaretta by her neighbours, in 1592 Bishop Laureti began the process of collecting information on Chiartetta's activities. Although much evidence had mounted against the two lovers and particularly against Chiaretta's use of and affiliation with presumed witches, the authorities had done very little to commence a trail against either party. Though an actual trial was not underway,

the two were still under surveillance, and in 1595, Fedele was instructed to no longer associate with Chiaretta, or he would be fined 200 Lire. Such a prohibition did not change the lovers's rendezvous, for the two continued to meet in various locales

The Trial:

The trial against Chiaretta commences in 1595, with the witness testimony of Maddalena, though she had not been sworn in “*ob parvam aetatem non competentem*” (Malavasi 159). One of the first issues that was raised was Chiaretta's involvement with Clemenza Bacca, one of the women that had already been deemed guilty of witchcraft, and who had many times over been subjected to the tortures of the Sant' Ufficio. It was Bacca who was thought to be a key figure in, if not the leader of, occult activities in the surrounding area. Though Bacca had long suffered the physical and mental tortures of the Sant' Ufficio, she at long last confessed to being a witch, though she had never denied her powers, and decided to reveal all of her acquaintances. Taking advantage of Maddalena's tender age, the authorities guided her in her testimony regarding Chiaretta's dealings with Bacca, and the already convicted Costanza Frattirolla. The young girl told the judges that women often went to the Church of the Rotonda, as did many other witches. It is here that the women swore upon an image of the Madonna del Soccorso, since, ironically, these presumed witches were faithful to the Virgin, for it is said that she protects *all* women. So faithful were the women that they would invoke her during torture.

Before performing a ritual, the women would convene at the Church of the Rotonda, and it is there that Maddalena comes across Chiaretta. Chiaretta instructs the young woman to perform various tasks in order to complete her spell against Fedele's

wife. Though Maddalena had been discovered by her mother who would hit her for her involvement with the presumed witches, the young woman continued to spy upon and at times aid Chiaretta. Both alleged witches confessed their involvement with Chiaretta, and confirmed that she did indeed use magic against Fedele's wife.

A warrant was subsequently issued for Chiaretta's arrest, but the woman had already fled. The trial continues without the accused, and turns to the testimony of her brother Francesco Galese. The man claims that he had never seen Chiara and Costanza Frattirolla together. After some time, the proceedings were put to a halt as the accused was nowhere to be found. In June of the same year (1596), Chiara presents herself before the inquisitor. Her deposition takes three days. Chiaretta tells the inquisitor that, though she knew that she would be charged and excommunicated for not being present at her hearing, she chose this course of action because of the threats that she received from her lover.

Chiaretta claims that it was Fedele who decided that he wanted his wife dead, and therefore paid a visit to Costanza Frattirolla who was to aid him in any way that she could, and stressed that money was not an obstacle. In order to conduct her spell, the witch Frattirolla instructed Fedele to take "*la misura della longezza de sua moglie*" (in Malavesi 174). Fedele did as he was told and supposedly gave the string to Chiaretta to return to Frattirolla. Chiaretta, who says that she was overwhelmed and frightened by the severity of what Fedele was about to do, decided to burn the offensive string. At which point she asked Maddalena to get her a piece of string that was the approximate length of the one she had burned. Perhaps it is because of her fear of the witch, or perhaps because of the feeling of solitude and general abandonment, that Chiaretta continued to frequent

Frattirolla. At this point, claims Chiara, no one would help her as she fled from town to town.

Subsequently, Chiaretta does admit that she visited Frattirolla, but only for fortune telling purposes. The tale is somewhat difficult to follow, as with any confession garnered under duress; the story is often convoluted. Chiaretta then tells the inquisitor that the witch convinced her that Fedele's wife was the obstacle, and that she needed to be removed. She then changes or amends her story by stating that the witch put a spell on Fedele. She wanted that Fedele "non potesse mangiare et beber sel non veiva da me" (Malavasi 176), and also asked the Devil to stop Fedele from hitting her. Chiaretta then tells the inquisitor that she initially met the other alleged witch (Clemenza) when she worked as a servant and cook in the Rana household. Clemenza would often offer to help Chiaretta with her romantic woes with the aid of magic.

As can be imagined, Fedele's version of the story greatly differs from that of Chiaretta. He claims that he knew nothing of the pact to murder his wife, and that he was the victim of Chiaretta's desires. As for Costanza Frattirolla, he claims that she was "una poltrona, perché lei è stata frustata e perché diceveno che la faceva delle strigherie," but above all he was certain that her house was "un reduto di poltrone, putane, gagliofo" (Malavasi 179). As is often the case, a woman's sexuality and her sexual history are on trial more so than the accusations pertaining to the alleged crime. Ultimately, Fedele is sentenced to recite the Rosary every Saturday, and to pay 100L.

In Chiaretta's defense, there is no mention of the most grave of her crimes, but rather her lawyer's request for leniency towards the woman, for she is a poor, fragile

imbecile.²⁹ In order for her family's status to not be greatly affected by the situation, Chiara's lawyer also asks that her sentence be conducted privately rather than publicly. On the 23rd of January in 1597, Chiara Galese was convicted and sentenced. The type of sentence that both she and her lover received is very interesting and in great contrast to the punishments administered by their English counterparts. Chiara was sentenced to fast every Saturday for the rest of her life, to recite the Rosary, to attend confession four times a year, and to spend her life in prison. The sentence of life imprisonment is quite misleading, as, according to her canonical rights, she could be granted her freedom after three years if she behaved well. On January 29th, Chiara's lawyer requested that she be permitted to serve the remainder of her sentence in her brother's home, and therefore under the control of a *male* relative. Part of her sentence was also to wear a vest that was an indication of her crime. Though her family and her lawyer asked the courts for leniency, as this would affect the families status, the judge partially acquiesced by permitting Chiara to hide the vest when she and her family attended church. From this action, it is evident that the crime against her faith had been absolved, but the egregious act against society had yet to be forgiven.

A woman's status in society was very much determined by her allegiance to a man. That is to say that a married woman, and especially one that has had biological children, assured herself greater status in early modern Italian society. A widow, though less so than a currently married woman, was still looked upon with respect because she had, at one time, been married. *Il nubilato* or single status, explains Messina, was not looked well upon, and it was hoped that it would be something temporary (520-21). Children born out of wedlock were frowned upon. Regardless, motherhood was still

²⁹ "Haver riguardo della sua imbecilità et fragilità" (Malavasi 184).

something taken very seriously by Italian society and further evidence of this may be found in the dowry system of the early modern period. If a woman had been raped and she was poor, the state would provide her with a dowry in order to aid her in that very difficult time and/or to save the child from the rather common practice of infanticide or abandonment. Therefore, Chiaretta had initially made a rather smart move in seeking the company of and possible marriage to Fedele in order to improve her social status, but she should have set her sights on a man who was not currently married.

The Case of Benvegnuda Pincinella: Medicine Woman or Witch?

With the Bull of Innocent VIII issued on December 9, 1484, the repressive apparatus set up against witchcraft became systematized and generalized. The Papal Bull was initially requested by German demonologists in an attempt to halt the spread and dissemination of witchcraft. Though numerous texts covering sorcery and the demonic had been written,³⁰ Pope Innocent's official request was made to Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger who subsequently produced the *Malleus Maleficarum*. The Papal seal of approval not only legitimated the witch hunts, but also set the tone for a reorganization of social normative behaviours, and juridical procedures.

The trial of Benvegnuda began on the 24th of June in 1518, and came to an end on the 29th of the same month and year. Piero Albanese, who was the official Inquisitor at that time in Brescia, arrested the sixty-year-old Benvegnuda because of her involvement in the practice of medicine as well as sorcery. The woman was not unknown to the authorities, for she had already been arrested for the practice of medicine and defined a

³⁰ For example: Giovanni XXII's *Super Illius Specula* (1326); Bernard Gui's *Pratica Inquisitionis Haereticarum Privatis*; Johann Nyder's *Formicarum*; Pierre Mamoris's *Flagellum* circa 1460-1470 (Bondi 65).

“medichess” (Bondi 68). For this initial offence, the woman was sentenced to kneel in front of the altar at the Duomo every Sunday. The evident public nature of her sentence was not only meant to make a spectacle of the woman, but also to discourage other people from committing the same acts.

Benvegnuda was a village healer who collected herbs, took care of the elderly and those who were not well, and generally prescribed folk remedies for a vast array of ailments. The area of Brescia frequented by Benvegnuda was of a very rich and fertile soil, so much so that many of the herbs required for medicinal purposes were available only in her village. It is not surprising then that a woman who dealt with the wellbeing of her neighbours, and who had already been convicted for illicit behaviour, was readily blamed for an illness or of a cure that was not effective. The man who made the initial accusation was one of her neighbours. Benvegnudo da Pontevigo was called before the inquisitor Lorenzo de Mazi in order to officially accuse Benvegnuda Pincinella of the crime of witchcraft. Among the man’s various accusations against Pincinella, he said that many people in the village were certain that she was a witch, and that she had cast spells against particular people, had created tempests that destroyed crops, and that she had caused physical deformities in children. The man also described Pincinella’s activities on a mountain top almost word for word as it is described in the various demonological texts that circulated at the time.

The subsequent day, on the 20th of June, another person, Pasquina, came to testify in regard to her dealings with Pincinella. The woman said that Pincinella had come to her home on numerous occasions to help her and her mother. She claimed that, by means of a belt, the medicine woman would diagnose the ailment and prescribe the adequate

remedy. Though nothing particularly diabolical had been derived from Pasquina's testimony, the inquisitor attributed this to the fact that Pincinella had often helped Pasquina, and was therefore indebted to her. The third accusation came from a notary by the name of Zuani Francesco de Tolinis. Though he did not admit to having gone to the alleged witch for his own gain, he did say that he heard her recite various incantations. From the testimony given by Tolinis, it appears as though he visited the accessed witch in order to gain the love of a certain woman. The incantation that he said he heard Pincinella recite is as follows:

Io te sconzuro et se te strenzo ti Zoan, ti Antoni et ti Ysepo, che ti debbi cosi far affocar il cor, el corpo, la mente e la volontà del la tal persona, che la non possi andar ne star, ne requiar, ne polsar, ne beber, ne manzar, ne dormir fina che non la fa la mia volontà. (Bondi 73)

The last and final accusation made by the notary involves Pincinella's distribution of a concoction that would induce a miscarriage. This was seen as particularly outrageous in light of religious doctrine.

Benvegnuda Pincinella confessed to everything, and ultimately was spared any torture. She admitted to partaking in sexual activity with her Devil Zuliano on the 25th of June in 1518 on the mountaintop of Tonale, as was described by her first accuser. It was there that she renounced the Catholic faith and performed various profane acts with the cross as well as other Devils and lovers. The woman told Fra Lorenzo that she had first met her Devil when she was 36 years old when, on a hot summer night, she and two other women decided to steal some grapes. The monotony of the work the women had been assigned to perform during the wee hours of the morning, the fact that Pincinella

admitted that they were drunk, and illicit sexual activity, read like most demonological texts. For that matter, a mixture of young people, alcohol, and sex makes for a story of general debauchery in any era. Ultimately, Pincinella did not ask for a lawyer or any type of defense; rather she asked for leniency. Fra Lorenzo decided to leave the matter to the secular courts, but, as is outlined in the diary of Marin Sanudo, Benvegnuda Pincinella was indeed burned at the stake: “Questo è il processo di Benvegnuda ditta Pincinella, de terra Navi de Valcamonica, striga, qual fo brusata” (in Bondi 84).

It is interesting to note that the outcome of the case against Chiaretta and that against Benvegnuda Pincinella, differ significantly from each other. Though both women were accused of performing witchcraft, Pincinella was burned at the stake, while Chiaretta had to serve a rather mild penitence. Why is that the case? Certainly, no clear and definitive answer is readily available, but I suggest that it is due to the women's difference in age, class, and marital status. Messina notes that women in various regions of Italy considered themselves witches and *fattucchiere* by profession, similarly to Pincinella. Therein lies the great difference between the two women; Pincinella is proud to be a healer, an apothecary, a witch, is poor and aged, while Chiaretta is sexually available, of higher social status, and presents herself as a victim.

The fact that Pincinella had already been convicted of witchcraft certainly did not work in her favour. As is discussed by David Gentilcore, most of those accused of sorcery had already accrued the reputation of using *maleficium* in public (97-99). This can be seen in the testimony that was given in Pincinella's trial. Her first accuser claims that he saw the woman reciting incantations upon a mountaintop, and heard her curse some of her neighbours. Accepting the label of witch may also have been a form of

female empowerment and self-fashioning. Diana Purkiss argues that performing one's identity as that of a witch may be understood as a form of agency and if one only reads the accused witch as a victim of patriarchal power, then the woman's agency is erased from the equation (145-48). I suggest that the trial of Pincinella may be understood as the result of a woman's self-fashioning and attempt at agency. Many women, especially in the middle ages, were revered for their powers as healers. Pincinella was just that, a healer for her community, and she did indeed claim that status. Purkiss also suggests that women accused of witchcraft often created "stories about themselves using cultural material which had become devalued by the elite" (145).

The alleged witch's age also plays a significant role in the way that she is perceived in the community, as well as by the judges after she has officially been accused. Women, who are past the childbearing years, are disproportionately represented in accusations of witchcraft. This is particularly alarming since the average life expectancy of people in early modern Europe was significantly lower than it is now. Lyndal Roper suggests that menopausal and postmenopausal women who had had children were thought to be envious of young women with children, and wished to affect the women's fertility. Women who were older, as has already been discussed, were more likely to be living in poverty and would, therefore, attempt to put their experience with childrearing to use. Often, it is precisely the desire to make financial gains from their knowledge of childcare and care for the household that would lead to accusations of malevolent behaviours. As has been seen in the visual representations of witches that I have discussed in the previous chapter, the female witch is typically depicted as old, haggard, and sexually frustrated. The female body and society's relation to it were the

cause of much mystery, as well as fear. Policing what was deemed unruly behaviour became an all-consuming endeavour couched in the moniker of witchcraft in early modern England and Italy.

Concluding Remarks

For the convict, the penalty is a mechanics of signs, interests and duration. But the guilty person is only one of the targets of punishment. For punishment is directed above all at others, at all the potentially guilty. So these obstacle-signs that are gradually engraved in the representation of the condemned man must therefore circulate rapidly and widely; they must be accepted and redistributed by all; they must shape the discourse that each individual has with others and by which crime is forbidden to all by all- the true coin that is substituted in people's minds for the false profits of crime. (Foucault 108)

Informed by Michel Foucault's views on the administration of punishment and the creation of docile bodies in *Discipline and Punish*, I suggest that the witch-hunting machine may be read as a social precursor to the physical edifice of the Panopticon. Rather than Foucault's soldier in "Docile bodies," bearing the marks of bodily rhetoric, the witch's corporeal being bears the signs of that which is deemed counternormative and in need of correction. The witch then becomes the "object and target of power" (Foucault 136). As much as power is exerted upon her, it is because of her presumed *powers*, that she is feared. I argue that Bantham's Panopticon is in place in the social regulatory apparatus of the communities that have been examined in my study. It is not at all coincidental that most, if not all, accusations against presumed witches, were made by neighbours. The initial seed of suspicion germinates in the mind of the scorned neighbour; the idea is then passed on to another acquaintance, a group of people living in close proximity to the accused, then take on the role of the invisible guard in the tower, and thereby constitute "a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism" (Foucault 197).

By making use of the ‘everyman,’ the disciplinary apparatus of witch-hunting, I suggest, may be understood as a way of ensuring the docility of the body by making it possible for the juridical apparatus to constantly observe and immediately identify social deviance, by proxy. Similarly to the Panopticon, this enforcement-by-proxy induces “a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (201). One should remember that, if one decides to defend an accused witch in the early modern period, the charge of witchery would often also be laid upon that person. Therefore, by knowing that one is under constant surveillance, the disciplinary apparatus seeks to create docile bodies out of its citizens. This, I argue, is why trials for this type of accusation, relied upon the participation and cooperation of many individuals who were close to the accused.

In my study of witch-hunting manuals, visual representations of witches, and actual case studies, it is important to remember that our *Malleus Malecifarum* or *Strix*, is not that of the citizens of early modern Europe. As is discussed by Terry Eagleton in “What is Literature?” a text changes over time. There are numerous assumptions buttressing the knowledge that is produced. Ideology, similarly to what type of knowledge is deemed valid, is highly policed; the level of aggressivity is dependant upon how egregious the infringement is perceived to be by a society that is situated temporally and geographically. It is important to remember that ideology is tied to power relations, namely to the distribution of power and wealth. If ideology is working efficiently, it is rendered invisible because one has become acclimatized to it, and it therefore seems ‘natural.’

The reception and understanding of a written as well as visual text is not homogenous or static in nature. Rather, “the forms of human consciousness and the mechanism of human psychology are not timeless and everywhere essentially the same, but rather situation-specific and historically produced” (Jameson 152). Throughout this study, I have attempted to read the witch trials in early modern Italy and England, as ideologems or socially symbolic acts. Because any trial document, confession, visual or textual document is reconstructed after the fact, it becomes a subtext. It is within this subtext that my analysis has taken place. Narrative, analytical or otherwise, is a socially and politically symbolic act, (Jameson 188) as is my study of such documents.

My decision to include the visual representations of witches by early modern artists is also one that sought to deconstruct the social and political apparatus of representation. As Pierre Bourdieu notes,

...taste is thus the source of the system of distinctive features which cannot fail to be perceived as a systemic expression of a particular class of conditions of existence, i.e., as a distinctive life-style, by anyone who possesses practical knowledge of the relationship between distinctive signs and positions in the distribution. (296)

It must always be remembered that what is considered a work of art or legitimate within the cultural milieu of the artist, is based upon arbitrary categorizations. Art, be it visual or textual, is a performance. In “Identifications,” Raymond Williams gives the example of how the function and perception of cave paintings has changed (121). Though cave paintings are generally accepted as art in contemporary society, the reality is that because of the locale in which they were created, they were not on display, and for public

consumption. It is because they were later discovered by those who have the linguistic and cultural capital that is revered in elite circles that such paintings are now commonly accepted as representations of art. My question remains: What of the paintings that exhibit counterhegemonic views of the world? Though I find it very difficult to believe that there are, for example, no paintings by female artists in the early modern period that depict counterdiscursive representations of alleged witches, the fact of the matter remains that those who have power also have access to the tools of representation. Therefore, even though there may be many counterhegemonic depictions of witches, they were not accepted and exhibited. What is discussed in terms of an anomaly in art, may actually be the norm.

In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger begins to denaturalize the relation between the image and the thing it represents. This is represented in the liminal gap that exists between the signifier and the signified (woman-deviance-witchcraft). Identity, as I discussed in relation to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, is constructed linguistically. That is to say identity, like language, is a mere set of codes and conventions that a society agrees upon, and that changes historically. Certainly, knowledge production and power play a very important role in the representation and codification of 'deviant' behaviour. Berger suggests that the economic and power relations in which something is produced, as well as the audience in which it circulates, affect its reception (20-23). Who commissions a text such as *Strix* or the *Malleus Maleficarum* to be written and circulated? The answer is simple and clear, those who have money and power, and who have a stake in propagating a specific worldview that is conducive to their particular social and economic location.

It is within the liminal space of the semiotic that woman is constructed as spectacle and in need of restraint. Certainly, none of the paintings or texts that I have discussed are produced by women. Therefore, issues of power and knowledge production are at play, yet erased from the actual texts. Throughout the texts that I have analysed as well as in the visual representations of witches in early modern Europe, one may see the projection of male fear and anxiety in relation to assertive, independent, sexual women. The desire to eliminate such women is projected onto the figure of the female witch. She is all that is viewed as abject. As is observed by Ferdinand de Saussure, “meaning is produced through a process of combination and selection...the function of language is to organize and construct our access to reality.” (55)



Fig. 1
Albrecht
Dürer:
*Witch
Riding
Backward
on Goat*

Engraving,
115x70
mm.
Kupferstich
kapinett,
Staatliche
Museen,
Berlin. c.
1500-1501.

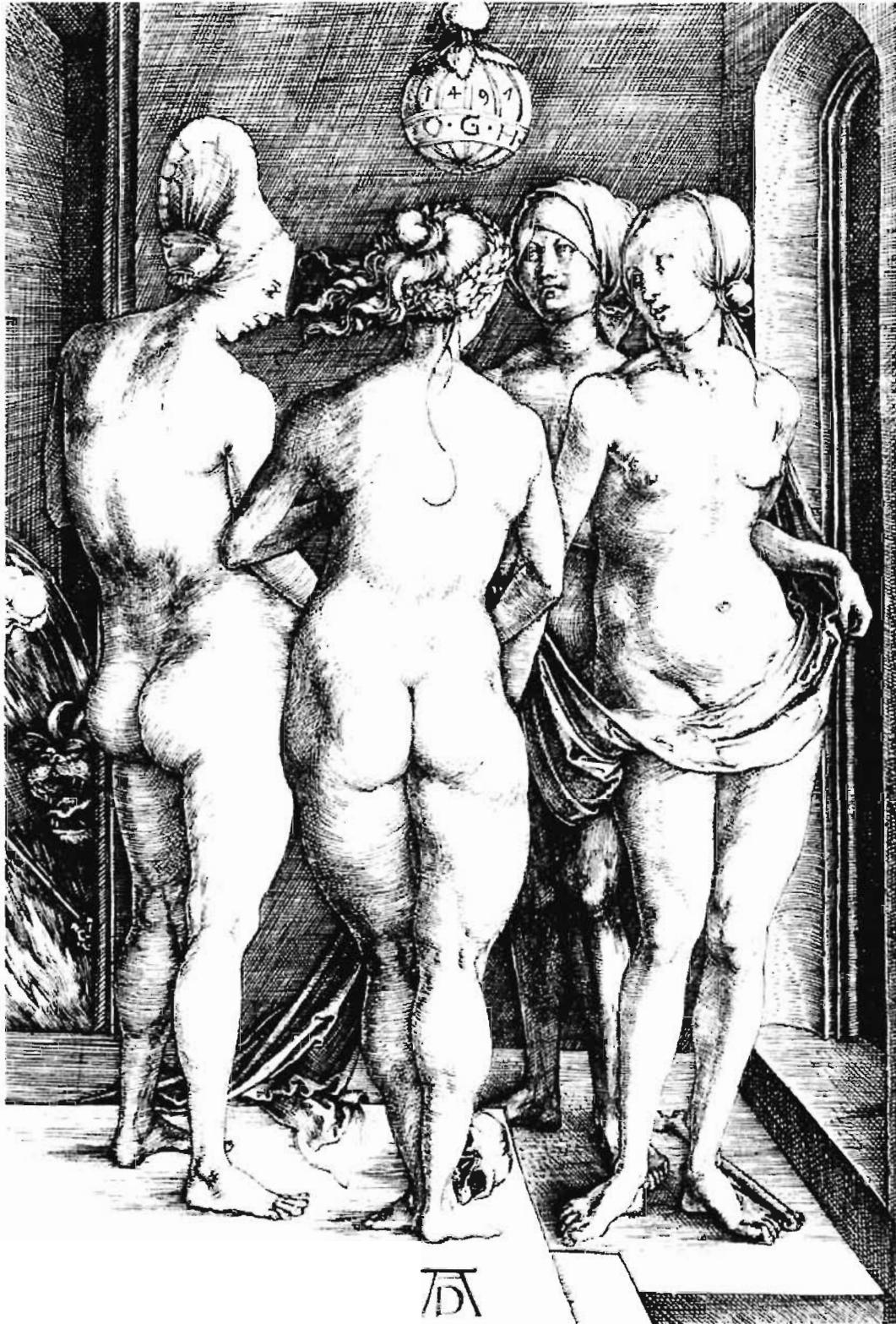


Fig. 2 Albrecht Dürer: *The Four Witches*. Engraving, 1497, Dept. of Drawings and Prints, Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 3 Albrecht
Dürer:

*Dream of the
Learned Man.*

Dept. of
Drawings and
Prints, Uffizi
Gallery,
Florence.



Fig. 4 Albrecht Durer: Witch as an Evocation of the World Turned Upside Down. Engraving. 1500-1501, Dept. of Drawings and Prints, Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 5 Hans Baldung Grien: *Seated Woman Defecating*. Red Chalk Drawing, 1513, Staatliche Museum, Berlin.

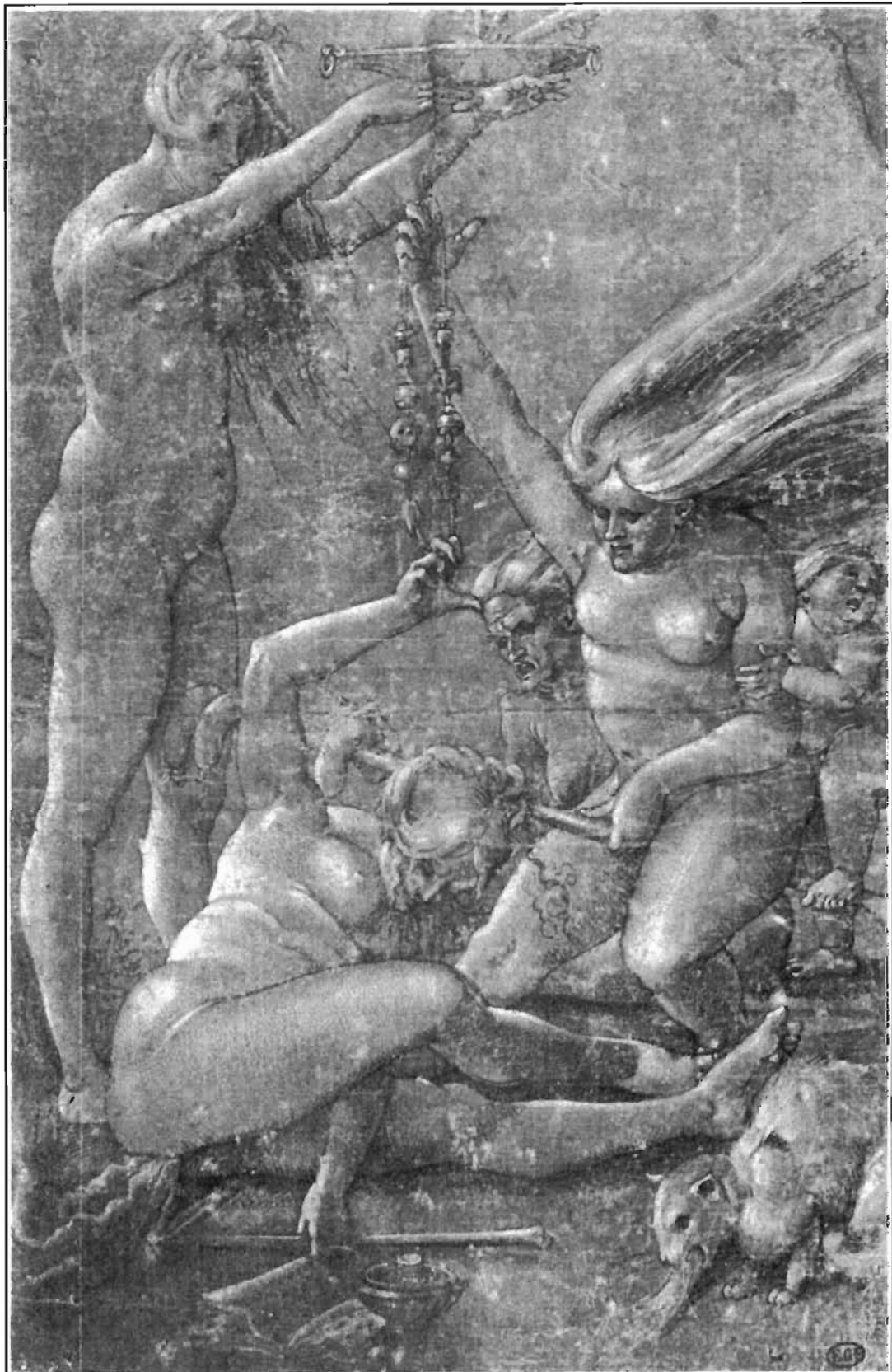


Fig. 6 Hans Baldung Grien: *Witches Preparing for the Sabbath Flight*. Chiaroscuro pen drawing on reddish-brown tinted paper. Alberine Museum, Vienna.

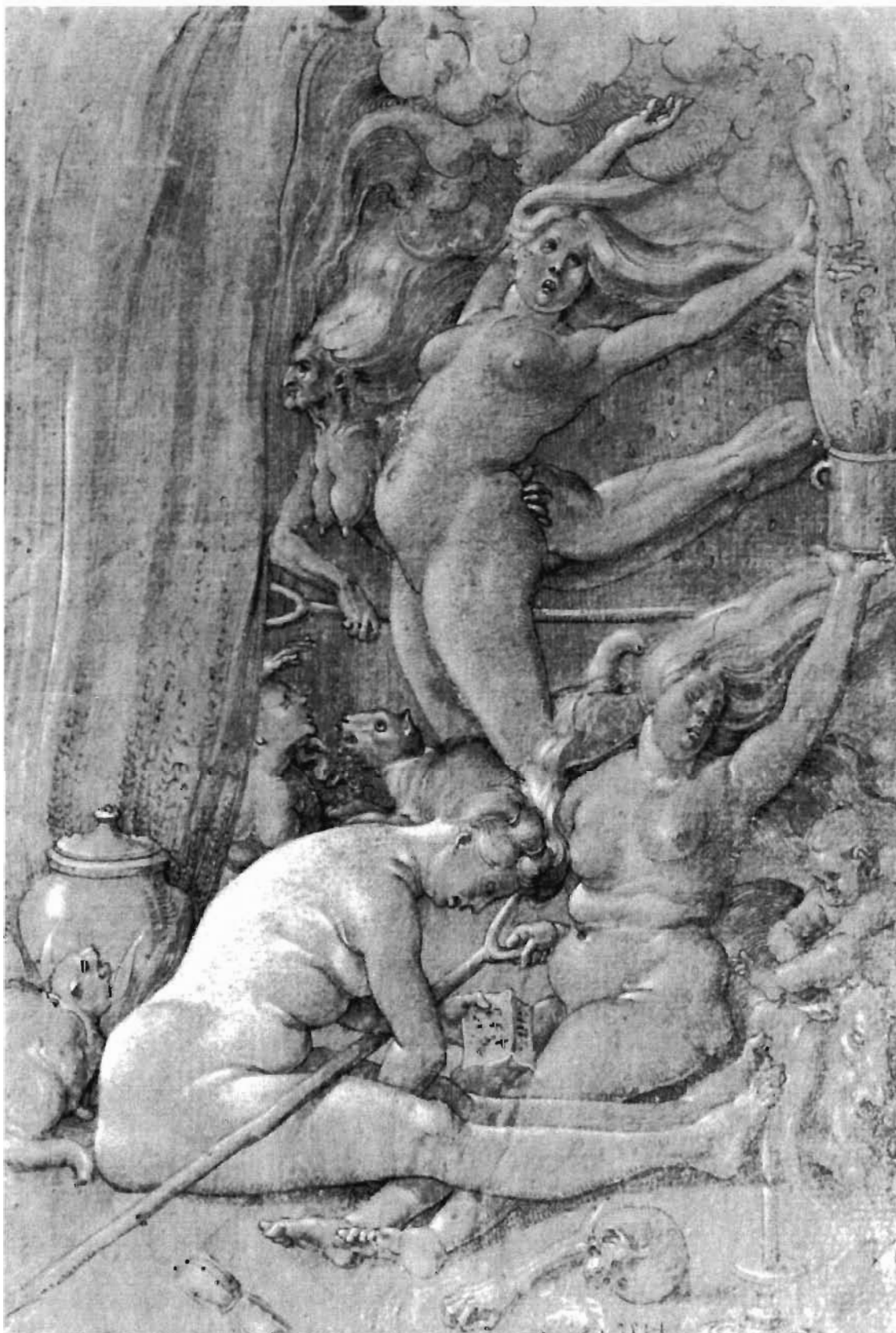


Fig. 6b Hans Baldung Grien: *Witches Preparing for the Sabbath Flight 2*. Chiaroscuro pen drawing on reddish-brown tinted paper. Albertine Museum, Vienna.

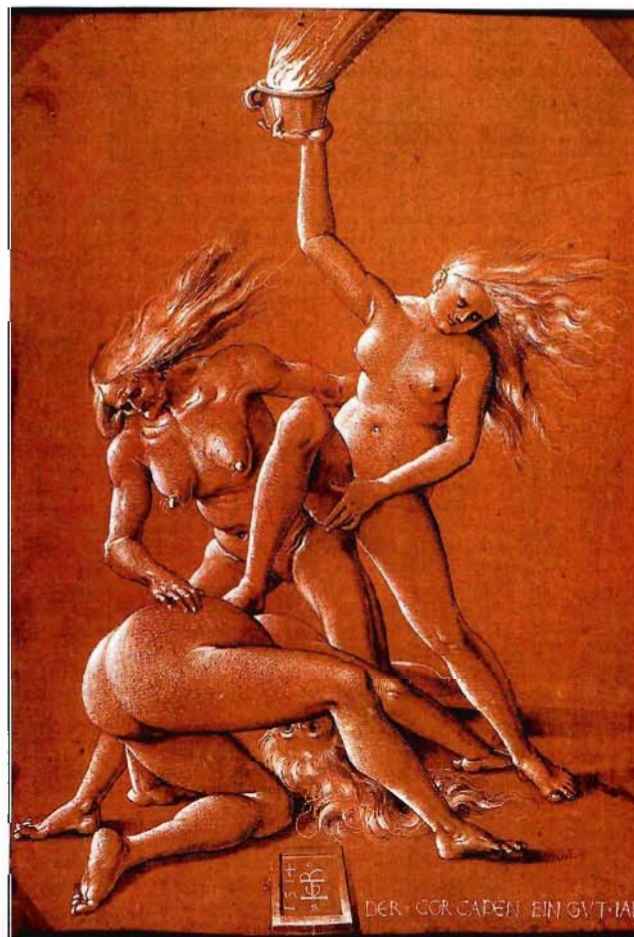


Fig. 7 Hans
Baldung Grien:

Three Witches.

Chiaroscuro pen
drawing on
reddish-brown
tinted paper.
Albertine
Museum,
Vienna.



Fig. 8 Hans Baldung Grien: *The Witches*.

Ciaroscuro, Bertarelli Collection, Sforza Castle, Milan. 1510.

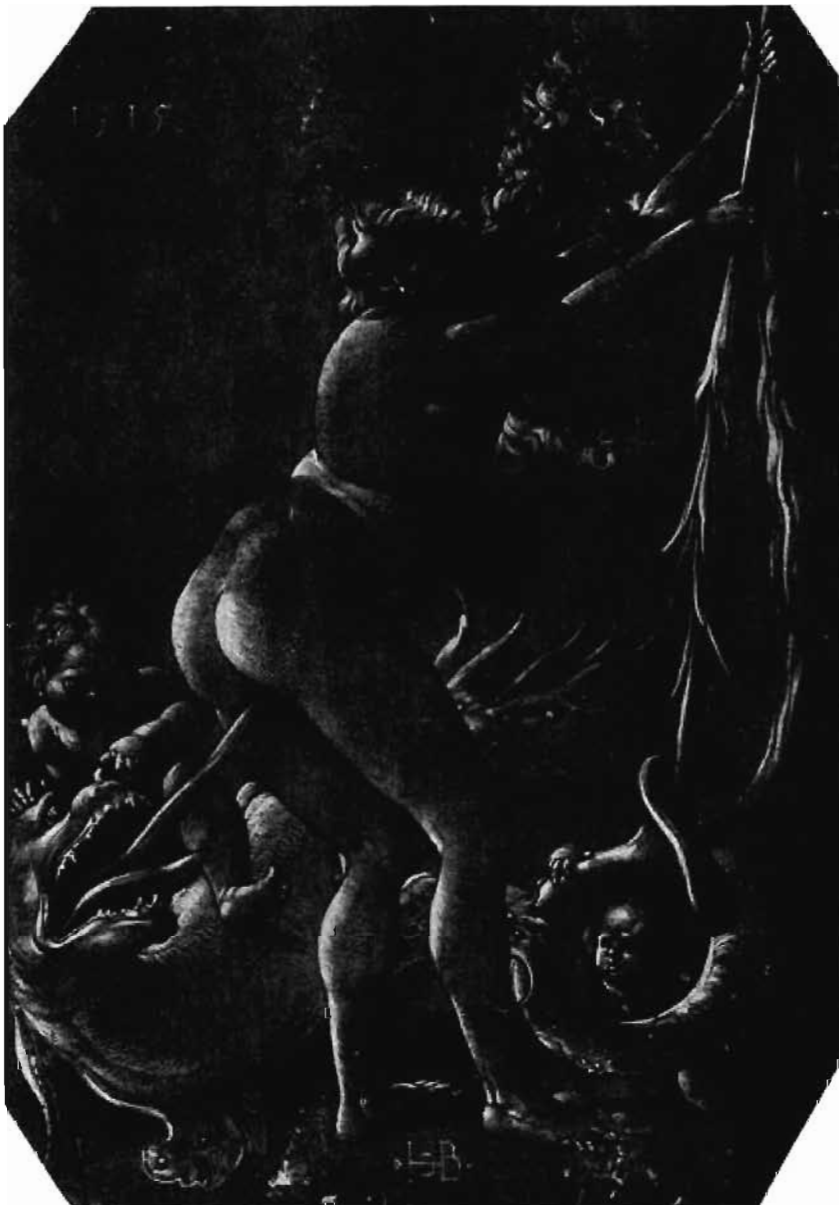


Fig. 9 Hans Baldung Grien: *Young Witch and Dragon*.

Chiaroscuro pen drawing on brown-tinted paper, 1515.



Fig. 10 Agostino Veneziano: *Lo Stregozzo*. Copper engraving on ivory-coloured paper. c. 1520.



Fig. 11 Salvatore Rosa: *Scene with Witches- Day*. Oil on canvas, 54.5 cm diameter.



Fig. 12 Salvatore Rosa: *Scene with Witches- Morning*. Oil on canvas, 54.4 cm diameter.



Fig. 13 Salvatore Rosa: *Scene of Witchcraft*. Oil on canvas. Corsini Collection, Florence. Mid 1540's.

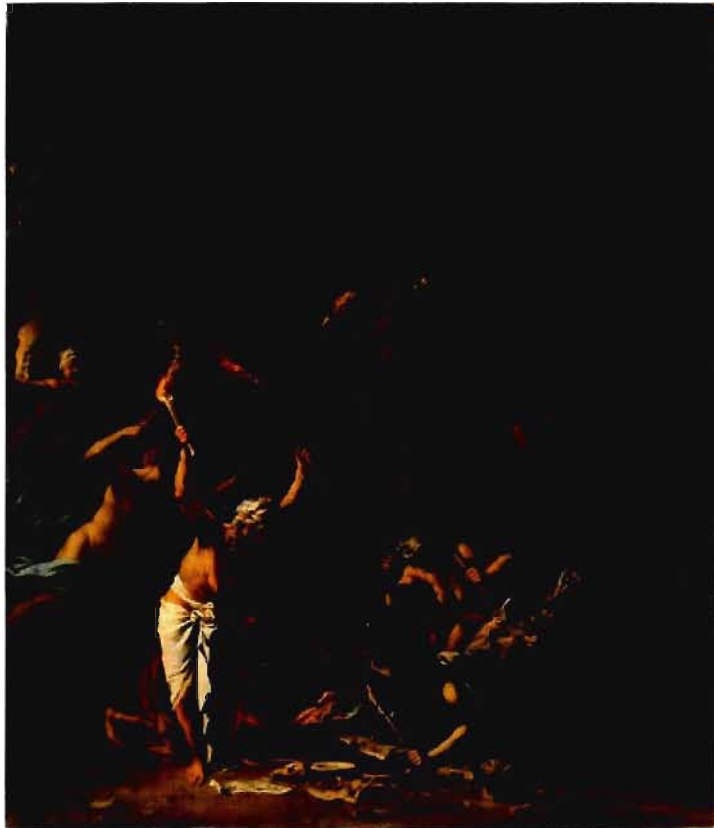


Fig. 16 Salvatore Rosa: *Witches at their Incantation*. Oil on canvas. National Gallery, London. c. 1646.



Fig. 15 Salvatore Rosa: *Witch*. Oil on canvas. National Gallery, London. c. 1646.



Fig. 16 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Boiling Pot*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.



Fig. 17 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Devil's Kiss*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.



Fig. 18 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Sabbath*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.



Fig. 19 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Dancing*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.



Fig. 20 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Feasting*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.



Fig. 21 Francesco Maria Guazzo: *Baptism*. From *Compendium Maleficarum*. Milan, 1626.

HIC MULIER:
OR,
The Man-Woman:
Being a Medicine to cure the Coltick Disease of
the Staggers in the Masculine-Feminine
of our Times.
Expressed in a brieft Declamation.
Non omnes possumus omnes.
Mistress, will you be trim'd or muss'd?



London printed for J. T. and are to be sold at Christ Church Gate. 1620.

Fig. 22: Frontispiece from "Hic Mulier". In *Half Human Kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*. p. 264.

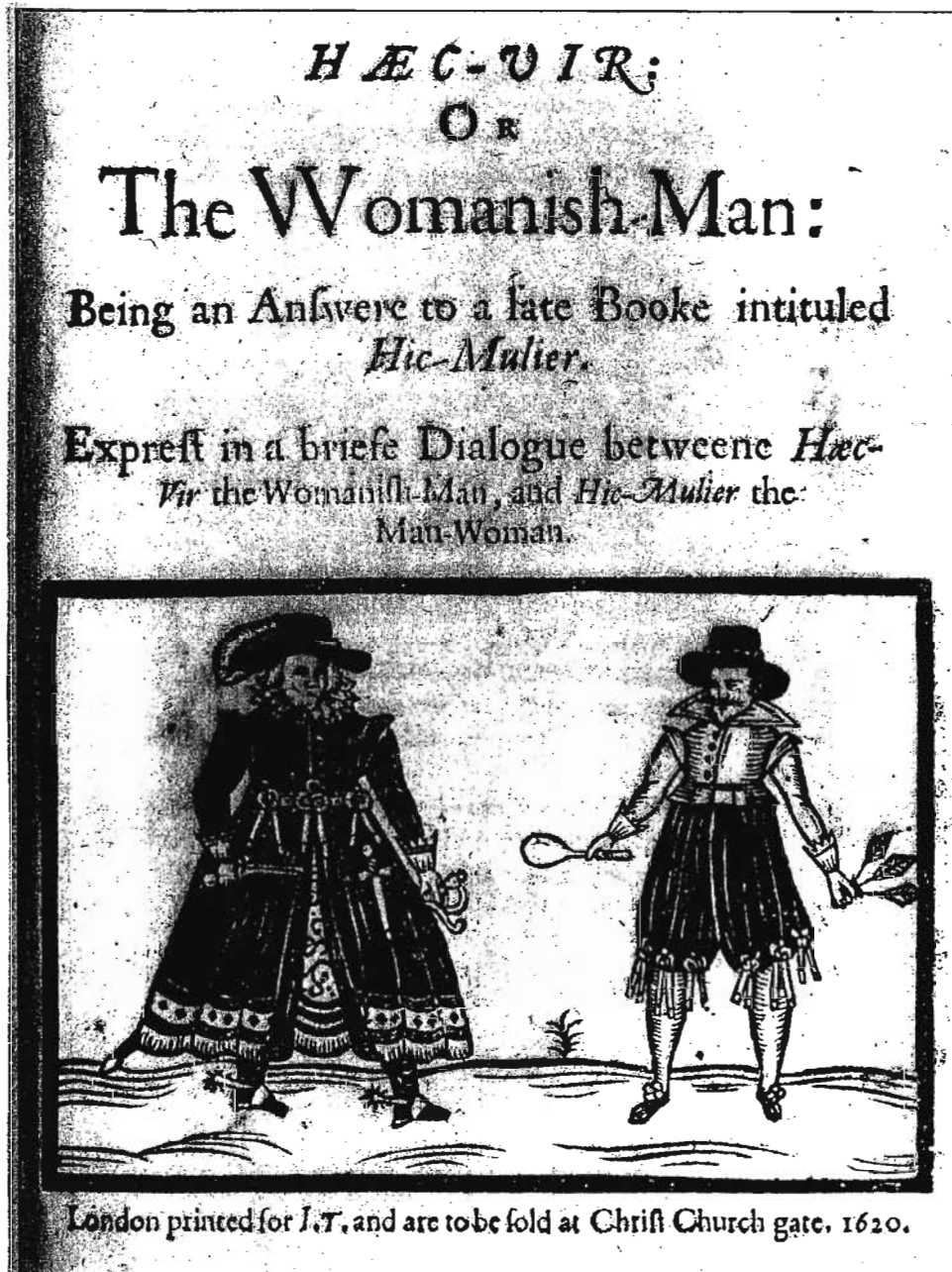


Fig. 23 Frontispiece from *Haec Vir*. In *Half Human Kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*. p. 277.

Works Cited

- Abbiati, Sergio, Attilio Agnoletto, and Mario Rosario Lazzati. *La Stregoneria: Diavoli, Strega, Inquisitori dal Trecento al Settecento*. Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1984.
- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1973.
- Bever, Edward. "Female Aggression, and Power in the Early Modern Community." *Journal of Social History* 35.4 (Summer 2002): 955-88.
- Bondi, Cladio. "Benvegnuda Pincinella." *Strix: Medichesse, Strega e Fattucchiere nell' Italia del Rinascimento*. Rome: Lucarini, 1989. 65-84.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Trans. Gino Raymond & Matthew Adamson. Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1991.
- Caretti, Laura and Dinora Corsi. *Incanti e Sortilegi: Streghe nelle Storia e nel Cinema*. Pisa: ETS, 2002.
- Corsi, Dinora, and Matteo Duni. 'Non Lasciar Vivere la Malefica.' *Le Strega nei Trattati e nei Processi: Secoli XIV-XVII*. Firenze, Italy: Firenze UP, 2008.
- Costa, Gustavo. "Love and Witchcraft in Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola: La Strega Between the Sublime and the Grotesque." *Italica* 67.4 (Winter 1990): 427-39.
- Creed, Barbara. "Kristeva, Femininity, Abjection." *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. New York: Routledge, 1993. 8-14.
- Duni, Matteo. *Under the Devil's Spell: Witches, Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in Renaissance Italy*. Florence, Italy: Syracuse University Florence, 2007.
- Eagleton, Terry. "Introduction: What is Literature?." *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Minnesota: U of Minnesota P, 1998.
- Emison, Patricia. "Truth and Bizzarria in an Engraving of Lo Stregozzo." *The Art Bulletin*. 81.4 (Dec. 1999): 623-36.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books. 1995.
- Gentilcore, David. "Witchcraft Narratives and Folklore Motifs in Southern Italy." *The Witchcraft Reader*. Ed. Darren Oldridge. New York: Routledge, 2004. 97-112.
- Heinrich, Kramer & Jacob Sprenger. *Malleus Maleficarum*. London: The Hogarth P,

1969.

Henderson, Katherine Usher, and Barbara F. McManus. "*Hic Mulier.*" *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1985. 264-76.

------. "*Haec Vir.*" *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1985. 277-89.

------. "A Pitiless Mother (1616)." *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1985. 360-67.

------. "The Wonderful Discovery of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Philippa Flower (1618)." *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1985. 368-380.

Herzig, Tamar. "The Demon's Reaction to Sodomy: Witchcraft and Homosexuality in Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *Strix*." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 34.1 (Spring 2003): 53-72.

Hults, Linda C., "Baldung and the Witches of Freiburg: The Evidence of Images." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. 18.2 (Autumn 1987): 249-276.

------. "Inventing the Witch in the European Heartland: Durer and Baldung." *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender and Power in Early Modern Europe.* Pennsylvania: U of Pennsylvania P, 2005. 27-56.

Jameson, Frederic. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act.* New York: Cornell U P, 1982.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1982.

Larner, Christina. *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986.

Levack, Brian P. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe.* New York: Longman. 1995.

------. *The Witchcraft Source Book.* New York: Routledge. 2004.

Lorenzi, Lorenzo. *Witches: Exploring the Iconography of the Sorceress and Enchantress.* Florence: Centro Di della Edifimi srl, 2005.

- Malavasi, Stephanie. "Una Storia de Magia e di Veleni." *Tra Diavoli e Aquasanta: Eretici, Maghi e Streghe nel Veneto del Cinque-Seicento*. Rovigno, Italy: Minelliana, 2005. 153-88.
- Messana, Maria Sofia. "Streghe, Fattucchiere, Guaritrici e 'donne di fora.' *Inquisitori, Negromanti e Streghe nella Sicilia Moderna: 1500-1782*. Palermo, Italy: Sellerio Editore, 2007. 520-71.
- Montesano, Marina. "L'avventura Semantica della Parola 'Strega': Tra Medioevo e Rinascimento." *Incanti e Sortilegi: Streghe nella Storia e nel Cinema*. Eds. Laura Caretti and Dinora Corsi. Comune di San. Miniato, Italy: Centro Cinema Paolo e Vittorio Taviani, 2002. 31-49.
- Neave, Dorinda. "The Witch in early 16th-Century German Art." *Women's Art Journal* 9.1 (Spring-Summer 1988): 3-9.
- Parinetto, Luciano. "Streghe e Capitale." *Streghe e Politica: Dal Rinascimento Italiano*. Milan, Italy: Istituto Propaganda Libreria, 1983. 203-42.
- . "Streghe e Capitale." *Streghe e Potere: Il Capitale e la Persecuzione dei Diversi*. Milan, Italy: Rusconi, 1998. 204-61.
- Pastore, Federico. *La Fabbrica delle Streghe: Saggio sui Fondamenti Teoretici e Ideologici della Repressione della Stregghonerica nei Secoli XIII-XVII*. Udine, Italy: Campanotto Editore, 1997.
- Purkiss, Diane. "Self-fashioning by Women: Choosing to be a Witch." *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-century Representations*. New York: Routledge, 1997. 145-76.
- Rocke, Michael. *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Italy*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- Roper, Lyndal. *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2004.
- Saussure, de Ferdinand. *Sign, System, and Arbitrariness*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1991.
- Schmitt, C.B. "The Development of the Historiography of Scepticism: From the Renaissance to Brucker." *Scepticism from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Eds. R. H. Popkin and C.B. Schmitt. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz. 1988. 187.
- Stephans, Walter. "Why Women?: The *Malleus Maleficarum*." *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2002. 32-57.

- Sullivan, Margaret A., "The Witches of Durer and Hans Baldung Grien." *Renaissance Quarterly* (53.2 (Summer 2000): 333-401.
- Waite, Gary K., "Religious Pluralism and the End of the Witch-Hunts." *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Hampshire, England: Palgrave-MacMillan. 2003. 192-228.
- Wiegman, Robyn, Judith Roof. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity*. Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1995. 97-119.
- Williams, Raymond. "Identifications." *The Sociology of Culture*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995. 119-47.
- Willis, Deborah. "(Un) neighbourly Nurture." *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995. 27-81.
- , "James Among the Witch-Hunters." . " *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995. 117-58.
- Zika, Charles. "Cannibalism and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Reading the Visual Images." *History Workshop Journal* 44 (Autumn 1997): 77-105.